

# The Eucharistic Exercises: Using the concept of *reditus*, as explicated in Benedict XVI's *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, to understand the central movement and eucharistic context of Ignatius Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*

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**THE EUCHARISTIC *EXERCISES*:**  
**Using the Concept of *Reditus*, as Explicated in Benedict XVI's *The Spirit of the Liturgy*,**  
**to Understand the Central Movement and Eucharistic Context**  
**of Ignatius Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises***

**Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment**  
**Of the Requirements for the S.T.L. Degree**  
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## **Introduction to the thesis.**

The thesis of this paper is that the central movement of Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises* is the retreatant's entry into Christ's *reditus* within a Eucharistic context. This movement can be understood using the concept of *reditus*, as explicated in Benedict XVI's *The Spirit of the Liturgy*.<sup>1</sup> I will show how this Eucharistic *reditus* movement is present throughout the Four Weeks of the *Exercises*. One sees this in the many explicit references to the sacraments, liturgies, and the Eucharist in *Exercises*. One also sees this movement in the *Exercises* through its implicit Eucharistic context and dynamism. I will show the parallels between each of the Four Weeks and the four main parts of the Mass. I will show how the *reditus* movement is especially important in understanding two key meditations in the *Exercises*: the Call of the King and the *Contemplatio*. I will carefully analyze these two meditations, both textually and thematically, and show how they are similar to the text and movement of the Mass. In considering these different aspects, the reader will see how the central movement of the *Exercises* is precisely this: the retreatant's entry into Christ's *reditus* within a Eucharistic context.

The *Exercises* is a spiritual retreat manual, not a work of systematic theology. Pope Benedict XVI systematically outlines the *exitus-reditus* movement in *The Spirit of the Liturgy*. Benedict shows how this dynamic movement applies to the immanent Trinity, the economic Trinity, and in the Church's Eucharistic liturgy. Thus, his work will be used in this thesis as the main systematic resource for understanding the central movement of the *Exercises* and in setting forth the central hypothesis of this paper. While Benedict outlines *exitus-reditus* in *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, I will draw from several of his other works to expand and explain this movement as it pertains to his Christology and Eucharistic theology.

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<sup>1</sup> Benedict XVI, *The Spirit of the Liturgy* (trans. John Saward; San Francisco: Ignatius, 2000).

The reader should be alerted that I will use the name “Benedict XVI” and not Joseph Ratzinger throughout this thesis. I do this for several reasons. First, most libraries, bookstores, and online databases now list his books under the author “Benedict XVI,” “Pope Benedict,” or a similar variation. Second, it would be awkward to list the books written before his 2005 election to the papacy under one author, and those written after under a second author. Third, discussions about Catholic doctrine and levels of authority must distinguish between Joseph Ratzinger the theologian and Benedict XVI the supreme pontiff. Such distinctions are less important in my project which concerns spirituality, liturgy, and systematics. For a fuller explanation of my exclusive use of Benedict XVI, see the endnote on p 109 of this thesis.

This thesis will consist of three chapters. The thesis is structured chronologically, and from the broadest to the more specific theological concepts. The thesis begins with the immanent Trinity in Chapter 1 in examining Benedict’s Christology. This chapter starts with the broadest of theological concepts, the non-historic immanent Trinity. It will then proceed chronologically to creation, the Incarnation, Christ’s Passion, and resurrection. I will show how Benedict presents *exitus-reditus* as the central movement in each of these stages of Trinitarian life.

Chapter 2 will examine Benedict’s Eucharistic theology as outlined in *The Spirit of the Liturgy*. Here it is necessary to define key liturgical terms and to situate unique aspects of Christian worship within a larger historical, Scriptural, and theological context. Again, the focus throughout this chapter will be the movement of *exitus-reditus*. Pertaining to liturgy, this movement involves God’s action of entering into the present moment of the liturgy, and the congregation’s invitation to wholehearted participation.

In Chapter 3, I will show how the *reditus* movement is present in the *Exercises*, and how Ignatius presents it within a distinctly Eucharistic context and dynamism. Simply stated, entering

Christ's *reditus* through the Eucharist is the goal of the *Exercises*. I will show the parallels between the Four Weeks and the four parts of the Mass; then I will analyze the Call of the King and the *Contemplatio*. I will examine the texts and themes of these two meditations and show their close connection to the text and dynamism of the Eucharist.

## Chapter 1: Benedict's Christology

In several of his books, Benedict uses the Nicene Creed to outline his Christology. Here he is rooted in the core of Catholic tradition: the Scriptures and patristic sources—particularly Athanasius, Cyril of Alexandria, and the Council of Chalcedon. I will consider Benedict's writings as an example of "Christology from above." I will use the Nicene "top-down" historical structure to organize Benedict's writing. The analysis of Benedict's Christology begins with the immanent Trinity. The only Son of God is begotten before time began. Scripture refers to him as *Logos*, Wisdom, and Son. Then I consider Benedict's treatment of God's plan for creation, and the Word's activity in creation. The focus will be on God's action through mediation and symbol in the Old Testament, especially the burning bush, Exodus, Passover, and prophets. The paper then moves to Benedict's analysis of the economic Trinity—with the Incarnation, the life of Christ, the Last Supper, his suffering, death, and resurrection.

### **A. The Son in the Immanent Trinity: Only Begotten *Logos*, Son**

For Benedict, Christology is both an objective revelation and a deeply personal experience. God reveals himself to humanity in historical events as attested by Scripture and the tradition. The truth of this revelation is outlined by the Church in creeds and councils. The truth must be firmly believed by Christians so that they may have an authentic personal experience of God, especially in the person of Jesus Christ. God does not simply reveal information about himself, but reveals himself. The Trinity is a community of persons united in love; likewise, God's plan for creation is a community of human persons united in loving communion with the three divine persons. God desires that all people may live in loving relationship with him and with one another. This plan is most fully revealed in Jesus Christ. Christ provides the model and the means by which humanity may imitate his loving action.



The universe is ordered and logical because its source is God, the supreme Logos. Planets orbit in an orderly fashion. Day follows night. Seeds grow into plants, blossom, and create new seeds. The order of the cosmos images God's perfection and order. The universe is also personal because the *Logos* is a perfect person. "I believe in one God," begins the Nicene Creed. Benedict's *Introduction to Christianity* starts with these same words: I believe. A few pages later, he highlights the personal character of Christian faith: "its central formula is not 'I believe in something,' but 'I believe in you.'"<sup>2</sup> The Nicene Creed interprets Genesis 1 and John 1, as well as the whole world for us; the creed can do this only because God has revealed himself to us: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made" (John 1:1-3a).

The interplay of both objectivity and relationality is further shown in Benedict's use of the terms "Logos" and "Son" in naming the Second Person of the Trinity. "The concept of logos, which to the Greeks meant 'meaning' [ratio], changes here really into 'word' [verbum]. He who is here is Word; he is consequently 'spoken' and, hence, the pure relation between the speaker and the spoken to. Thus logos Christology, as word theology, is once again the opening up of being to the idea of relationship."<sup>3</sup> In Greek philosophy, *logos* designates truth, order, reason, and rationality. The universe is "*logical*;" the universe is orderly and understandable because it is created through the divine Logos. The Jewish concept of Wisdom (Sophia) and Law (Torah) have similar connotations of order and truth, yet these religious concepts are overlayed with the experience of God's covenant. The Logos was "with God in the beginning" (John 1:2). Christians know God the Father through the Logos, and the Logos through Jesus Christ, and Christ through the Church. Thus, already they have entered into the drama of revelation, in

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<sup>2</sup> Benedict XVI, *Introduction to Christianity* (trans. J.R. Foster. San Francisco: Ignatius, 2004), 79.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., brackets his, 189.

which God descends to humanity so that humanity may ascend. Some modern theologians criticize patristic Christology for being too abstract and lacking in relationality. However, Benedict deftly shows the inherent relationality of ancient patristic Christology. God “is not only *logos* but *dia-logos*.”<sup>4</sup> As a community of three divine persons, God is in eternal, loving dialogue. When one reads the Gospel accounts of the Incarnate Jesus’ prayer to the Father, one sees a glimpse of “the dialogue of love within God himself—the dialogue that God *is*.”<sup>5</sup> God is in relationship because God *is* divine relationship. This personalism has always been present in Christian faith, rooted in the Jewish experience of covenant, though the personal aspect has been overlooked at times (for example, in the elaborate systematic schemas of some neo-Thomists).

Even more than “*Logos*,” “Son” reveals the relational nature of the Trinity. The Son is begotten, “born of the Father before all ages,” and continually gives himself in love to the Father (Nicene Creed). Loving Sonship is also the final goal of every human life. This is what God wants for humanity—sharing in an intimate I-Thou relationship with Love himself. God wishes to share with humanity the loving relationship exemplified in the Trinity. Before creation, the Father begets the Son in an act of self-giving. This is the eternal, non-historic *exitus* and *reditus*. Love is neither a groveling submission nor a dissolving of the self into another. The Word is the perfect *reditus* even before creation. One may say that in begetting the Son, the Father “becomes fully” himself.<sup>6</sup> The Son is “God from God and Light from Light.” In some ways, the personhood of the Son makes him even more objective, more *logos*. This is important in God’s relationship with humanity. Humans can manipulate objects, changing them to suit their needs and fancies. However, since God is a person, God can actively “push back” against these

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., emphasis his, 183.

<sup>5</sup> Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism*, emphasis his, 344.

<sup>6</sup> One may say this only in a relative sense, since God is eternally perfect and cannot “become” more fully perfect.

manipulations—regularly asserting his objectivity, his personhood, his freedom and truth. This is true in God’s relationship with the Jews, as well as in Jesus’ interactions with his hearers. For Benedict, this is another example of the inherent unity between the titles *Logos* and Son, between the personal God YHWH and the God-man Jesus Christ.

During his earthly ministry, Jesus freely acknowledges that he came from the Father, has entered into the world, and is going back to the Father (John 16:28). The Son departs from the Father only to return to him in total love and obedience. The Father’s begetting is an act of pure love; he does this not by necessity, but freely. The Father does not re-absorb the Son, but honors his unique personhood—each holding the other in a kind of loving, respectful tension. The Son eternally imitates the Father’s gift. Benedict writes, “The Fathers of Nicaea intended the little word *homoousios* (consubstantial) to be the simple translation of the metaphor ‘Son’ into a concept... ‘Son’ is not a mere comparison, but literal reality.”<sup>7</sup> The Son is not a “mode” or face of God, but is a unique person; in a similar way, a girl is not a “mode” of her mother, but a unique person. In defending the language of the Creed, Benedict shows that Christians need not change their beliefs to make them relevant; Christians need to plunge into the mystery which has been defined and protected by the Creed.

The Son continually receives the Father’s love, and responds with his own gift of self-emptying love. The love between them is so powerful that this is the Third Person of the Trinity, the Spirit. Augustine writes, “So then there are three: the lover, the beloved, and the love. What else is love, therefore, except a kind of life which binds or seeks to bind some two together,

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<sup>7</sup> Benedict XVI, *The God of Jesus Christ: Meditations on the Triune God* (trans. Brian McNeil; San Francisco: Ignatius, 2008), brackets mine, 89.

namely, the lover and the beloved?”<sup>8</sup> This love is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit “designates that which is common in the Godhead. But this reveals the ‘proper character’ of the third Person: he is that which is common, the unity of the Father and the Son, the unity in Person. The Father and the Son are one with each other by going out beyond themselves; it is in the third Person, in the fruitfulness of their act of giving, that they are one.”<sup>9</sup> As the Son is in the “image and likeness” of the Father, so too the Spirit is like the Father and Son. “The Spirit is the Yes, just as Christ is the Yes.”<sup>10</sup> Unlike the competitive individualism that marks contemporary culture, one sees a different model of personhood here. Each Divine Person gives himself in deep love, thereby revealing his glory. The Spirit is revealed in nature and human experience, and particularly through the Christian mysteries: the Incarnation, resurrection, and the formation of the Church. The Spirit is God’s abiding presence in the Church, is active in the sacraments, and unites believers to God and to one another.

## **B. The Son in Creation**

### **B.1. God’s Plan for Creation and Humanity: Covenant, Revelation, Freedom, and Sin.**

The Trinitarian movement of *exitus* and *reditus* continues in the act of creation. “*Exitus* is first and foremost something thoroughly positive. It is the Creator’s free act of creation. It is his positive will that the created order should exist as something good in relation to himself, from which a response of freedom and love can be given back to him.”<sup>11</sup> God freely creates the universe and humanity in an act of free self-giving. God made the world, and “saw that it was good” (Gen 1:9). God said, “Let us make humanity in our image and likeness”—giving Adam

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<sup>8</sup> Augustine, *The Trinity* (trans. Stephen McKenna; Washington: Catholic University of America, 1963), 8.10.

<sup>9</sup> Benedict, *The God of Jesus Christ*, 109.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 113.

<sup>11</sup> Benedict XVI, *The Spirit of the Liturgy* (trans. John Saward; San Francisco: Ignatius, 2000), 32.

and Eve a similar capacity to give and receive personal love (1:26). In an embodied way, humans share the Trinity's communion through the "one flesh" sexual union. In the beginning, Adam and Eve share a loving relationship with God, and experience a kind of eternal historical existence in this *exitus-reditus*. They live in the beauty of the garden, in harmony with creation, in communion with one another and with God. After their sin, each of these relationships is badly ruptured though not destroyed.

In many biblical theology courses, creation is considered first, and then the Old Testament covenants of Noah, Abraham, and Moses. In this sense, covenant is seen as God's Plan B after humanity has botched Plan A. However, Benedict notes that "creation exists to be a place for the covenant that God wants to make with humanity. The goal of creation is the covenant, the love story of God and man."<sup>12</sup> He states elsewhere that the cosmos was created so "that there might be a space for the 'covenant', for the loving 'yes' between God and his human respondent."<sup>13</sup> The personal God invites humanity into the divine *dia-logos* of love. The universe is not made as some perfect perpetual motion machine, but as a place for personal relationship. The Son is eternally begotten in *exitus* from the Father, and he responds with a loving Yes in eternal *reditus*. Humanity is created in the image and likeness of God, and is called to respond "Yes" with the Son. This original covenant is given to Adam and Eve in their very being. They image God in several ways. They are united yet distinct by becoming one flesh in sexual union. They image God's creative fruitfulness by following the command to multiply. They image God's knowledge and dominion by knowing the garden, naming the animals, and knowing each other. And they image God's communal love in their direct communion with God.

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>13</sup> Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth. Part Two, Holy Week: From the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection* (trans. Vatican secretariat of state; San Francisco: Ignatius, 2011), 78.

Humans are given the freedom to love God or to turn away from God. In disobeying God, humanity enacts a distrust vis-a-vis God. Yet, at the same time, they grasp at becoming “Godlike” through their own devices. In Genesis, this is symbolized in the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The serpent promises Eve, “you will be like God” by eating of the forbidden tree (Gen 3:5). The fall is “saying No to the *reditus*. Love is seen as dependence and is rejected.”<sup>14</sup> Part of the consequence of sin is death: “for dust you are and to dust you will return” (Gen 3:19). Physical death brings a note of finitude, history, and finality into the picture; the man Adam now will have a definitive end to his earthly life. Death brings humanity into a cycle of monotonous “toil”—the ongoing repetition of birth, hard labor, suffering, and death. Yet, mysteriously, after the fall, God’s holy plan for humanity is slowly revealed and becomes more and more explicit. The covenant was foreshadowed in a few brief commands in Genesis 1-3; in the Pentateuch, God gradually explains and expands the covenant into commandments, Torah, and an entire communal way of life.

In the midst of humanity’s continued sinfulness, God does not abandon humanity, but continues to speak, listen, and interact with them. God maintains the covenant, even when humanity does not. In the burning bush, God gives his name to Moses: I AM. The difference between Plato’s notion of god and the God of the Jews is that “he has named himself.”<sup>15</sup> Pagan deities, such as Neptune and Marduk, had names associated with the earthly place where they exercised power, for example in the sea, over a particular valley, etc. The name I AM both reveals God’s personhood and plunges one into God’s utter eternity and glory. God “just *is*, without any qualification. And that means, of course, that he is *always* there—for human beings,

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<sup>14</sup> Benedict, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 33.

<sup>15</sup> Benedict, *Introduction to Christianity*, 119.

yesterday, today, and tomorrow.”<sup>16</sup> Gradually the Jewish people understood that God was not the greatest god among many, but the one true God of the universe. Benedict also considers the second part of God’s name, “the God of your fathers, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” Here God reveals himself as a personal God who has acted in history, speaking to the patriarchs of Israel. God reveals himself through creation, in history, and in the Jewish religion. One and the same God created the universe and humanity, called Abraham, and spoke to Moses. Plato’s divine *logos* is the personal God of the Jews.<sup>17</sup>

Patristic writers noted the unity of Greek philosophy and the Jewish Scriptures. In many ways, this bridge was built by the Jews through neo-Platonic thought, as shown in the extended reflection on Sophia in the books of Wisdom and Sirach. “Belief is wedded to ontology.”<sup>18</sup> The personal God’s universal claim on humanity had to be expressed in the most universal terms possible. “I am” is the *esse subsistens* of the philosophers. In this way, Benedict sees an inherent continuity between biblical revelation and philosophical terminology. He defends this position again in using the creedal language of *homoousios*, which I will address in the section below.

Through the covenant, and with the cooperation of humanity, God is slowly reordering the created world. This occurs in Jewish ritual and worship, in their culture and leadership, and in their moral lives. Moses’ completion of the tent tabernacle occurs on the seventh day, symbolizing the Sabbath and the completion of creation. On the Sabbath, humanity rests with God and in God. This points backwards to God’s original “rest” on the seventh day, as well as forward to the final consummation of the covenant. In the tabernacle tent, “God makes his

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<sup>16</sup> Benedict, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism*, emphasis his, 347.

<sup>17</sup> Benedict, *Introduction to Christianity*, 116-150.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 119.

dwelling in the world. Heaven and earth are united.”<sup>19</sup> The construction of the Temple in Jerusalem is a more beautiful and glorious dwelling for God. It is a more fitting and more permanent tabernacle “tent.” The Temple is the physical and spiritual center of the city of Jerusalem. The Jews build their lives around God. God promised Abram that “all peoples on earth will be blessed through you” (Gen 12:3). The Jews are God’s chosen people, the special recipients of his personal revelation; thus they are a “light to the nations” (Isa 49:6). The yearly cycle of liturgies and feasts pulls the whole cosmos into this dramatic, personal reordering. God’s revelation is experienced as both something new and as a return to God’s original covenantal plan. The Old Testament is filled with prophecy of a time when God’s plan will come to fruition through the Jews: “all people may know of your mighty acts and the glorious splendor of your kingdom” (Ps 145:12). Because of Israel’s faithfulness, they will become a truly prophetic nation. The kings of all nations will worship the true *Logos*, Israel’s God: to the “temple at Jerusalem kings will bring you gifts” (Ps 68:29).

Through the covenant, God desires that humanity cooperate with his initiative. He wishes to sanctify and purify them through the covenant, reordering humanity and the universe to share communion with the divine *Dia-logos*. Moreover, this sanctification and divine-human relationship are to serve as a light to all nations, bringing all people into loving relationship with God. Yet, Israel obeys only in fits and starts. Some kings, some priests, and some families respond in love, yet many more do not. Israel’s sinfulness, resulting in its exile in Babylon, and its military defeats all contradict the Scriptures’ glorious vision of hope. In the midst of sin, trial, and suffering, the images of kingship and messiah take on an increasing spiritual intensity. Psalm 2 promises a powerful king of whom God will say, “You are my son, this day I have begotten

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<sup>19</sup> Benedict, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 27.



you. Ask of me and I will make the nations your heritage” (2:1). These words must have sounded ridiculous to both Jews and Gentiles, as a parade of pagan nations overtook the Jews, including Philistines, Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans. Thus, the kingly and messianic prophecies gradually changed from a declaration of present glory into a message of hope for a chosen king in the future.<sup>20</sup> The book of Daniel introduces the image of the Son of Man who, on the clouds of heaven, prophesies a royal leader and a “new kingdom, a kingdom of “humanity,” characterized by the real power that comes from God himself.”<sup>21</sup> God will act through this leader, and yet the leader will respond to God in perfect freedom. Israel’s definitive “Yes” to I AM seems within reach, yet just beyond their grasp. Exactly who this leader would be, what he would do, and how he would act remained an ongoing source of disagreement, confusion, and hope for the Jewish people.

In the Old Testament, God offers a number of revelations, prophets, leaders, teachings, and covenants to humanity in the aftermath of the fall. Each of these gifts is an invitation for humanity’s *reditus*, that is, humanity’s loving return to God. Each offer is uniquely graced, but never fully received by sinful humanity. The Trinity’s internal rhythm of loving dialogue and self-gift becomes human in the Incarnation. The Son of God becomes the Son of Man, born of Mary. The Incarnation is a deliberate, one-time event with eternal implications. The next section now turns to the figure of Jesus Christ—to his Incarnation, life, the Last Supper, his suffering, death, and resurrection. For Benedict, Jesus exegetes himself in the Scriptures by word and deed.

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<sup>20</sup> Benedict, *Introduction to Christianity*, 216-223.

<sup>21</sup> Benedict, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism*, 326.

### **C. Incarnation.**

In his Christology, Benedict is self-consciously faithful to the New Testament, the Nicene Creed, the Council of Chalcedon, and patristic sources. In setting forth his Christology, Benedict draws upon two major genres: Biblical *haggadah* narrative and systematic theology. For example, the two volumes of *Jesus of Nazareth* restate the story of Jesus with exegesis and explanation, while *Introduction to Christianity* is a careful analysis and explanation of the Nicene Creed. The two genres are closely connected for Benedict. He cites patristic sources and creedal formulas in his biblical exegesis, while his systematic analysis employs many Scripture stories—particularly the exodus and the life of Christ. In all of this, Benedict presents Christ as the incarnate *Logos*-Son. He is the Person who wants to have a personal encounter with human persons. One need not add personalism to Christology, for the Son is inherently personal. Christ's incarnation and earthly ministry is a reordering of fallen creation according to God's designs. As I will show in the sections below, Christ centers Israel's central symbols on himself. The narrative of the Incarnate Son occurs within the systematic order of the *Logos*. For Benedict, *haggadah* narrative and systematic theology complement one another in the person of Jesus Christ.

C. 1. Jesus' Divinity. Benedict provides a robust defense of the divinity of Jesus in the face of "the historical Jesus" scholarship and modern skepticism. He relies on patristic and creedal sources for this defense. As I will show in this section, for Benedict, this belief flows from Jesus' own words and was held from the earliest days of Christianity. The core truth of Christology is consistent with what the apostles experienced and taught: "Jesus Christ is Lord" (Phil 2:11). "The Word was God... and the Word became flesh" (John 1:1, 14). These short formulas are both a summary of Scripture as well as the mustard seeds of the Church. Christians'

understanding of Jesus' divinity has been expanded and clarified through the creeds and the history of the Church.

Nicea wanted to protect the Christological mystery presented in the New Testament. In the Gospels, one sees: A. Jesus speaks to God the Father, showing that he is distinct from the Father: "Jesus prayed, 'Father, the time has come'" (John 17:1). B. Jesus says that he is one with the Father: "whatever the Father does the Son also does" (5:19). C. Jesus says that he is God, "He said, 'I AM he,' they drew back and fell to the ground" (18:6). D. People experienced Jesus as being fully human: "Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son" (Mark 6:3).

Nicea holds all of these points in a dramatic, unified tension. The Nicene creed uses the Greek philosophical term *homoousios*, "consubstantial." The term *homoousios* is simply "the translation of the metaphor 'Son' into a concept" by the Fathers of Nicea.<sup>22</sup> As John 1 and Philippians 2 proclaim, "Jesus is the Son, and in him God has become man."<sup>23</sup> The Creed declares that the eternal, unbegotten Son is of the same being as the Father. This is not a corruption of biblical faith, but a safeguard to protect the true mystery of biblical faith. In its testimony about the Son, "the Bible must be taken literally. The Word is literally true—that is what is meant by calling Jesus 'consubstantial' with the Father."<sup>24</sup> Benedict takes the Scriptures and the Creed literally. The power of the mystery is that Jesus is truly God and truly man. In this way, he expresses a kind of theological humility. Humanity does not "figure out" God, rather

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<sup>22</sup> Benedict, *The God of Jesus Christ*, 89.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, emphasis his, 90.

Christian faith “makes sense” of humanity’s broken condition. Following Athanasius, Benedict shows that by sharing in the divine Word, or Reason, men become truly rational.<sup>25</sup>

In the same way, Benedict defends the term *hypostasis*, which was a dogmatic clarification made at the Council of Chalcedon. Nestorians and others believed that there were two sons—that is, two persons, one with a human nature and one with a divine nature. “Following the teachings of the Fathers of the Church, the Council of Chalcedon also professed: ‘the one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in divinity and perfect in humanity, the same truly God and truly man...one in being with the Father according to the divinity and one in being with us according to the humanity...begotten of the Father before the ages according to the divinity and, in these last days, for us and our salvation, of Mary, the Virgin Mother of God, according to the humanity.’”<sup>26</sup> The refrain “one and the same” may be read both as a steadfast defense of the Christian mystery, as well as a rhythmic Scriptural confession and praise (Dan 3, Ps 136). Chalcedon provided “the formula that the one person of the Son of God embraces and bears the two natures—human and divine— ‘without confusion and without separation.’”<sup>27</sup> Benedict uses several Scripture passages to show the continuity of Scripture and creed. These include Psalm 2,<sup>28</sup> as well as the aforementioned Philippians 2 and John 1.<sup>29</sup> The biblical terms *Logos*, *Sophia*, and I AM are already loaded with ontological and philosophical

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<sup>25</sup> See Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*, in Edward Hardy, *Christology of the Later Fathers* (ed., trans. Edward Hardy and Cyril Richardson; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1954) 58. Hardy notes Athanasius’s use of “the familiar play between *Logos* and *logikos*; by sharing in the divine Word, or Reason, men become truly rational,” footnote (italics his).

<sup>26</sup> Catholic Church and Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Dominus Iesus: on the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church* (trans. Vatican secretariat of state; Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2000), 10.

<sup>27</sup> Benedict, *Jesus of Nazareth. Part Two, Holy Week*, 158.

<sup>28</sup> Ps 2:7: “You are my son, today I have begotten you.”

<sup>29</sup> Benedict, *Introduction to Christianity*, 216.

substance. Thus, in continuity with the Scriptures, the councils used philosophical language in creedal statements. For Benedict, the creeds confirm and protect the truth of Jesus Christ.

C.2. Jesus' Humanity. Benedict holds to the creedal belief that Jesus is fully divine and fully human. The *Logos*-Son takes on the whole of human nature and thus the whole of human experience, yet without sin. The two volumes of *Jesus of Nazareth* are Benedict's beautiful and heartfelt portrait of the man Jesus, who is the Divine Son. Benedict shows how Jesus' divinity plunged him *even more fully* into the human condition, rather than shielding him from it. "At the beginning of the crucifixion, Jesus was offered the customary anaesthetizing drink to deaden the unbearable pain. Jesus declined to drink it—he wanted to endure his suffering consciously."<sup>30</sup> Nor does Jesus escape into the familiar human anesthetics of fantasy and rationalization. He has both "the primordial fear of created nature in the face of imminent death, and...the particular horror felt by him who is Life itself before the abyss of the full power of destruction, evil, and enmity with God that is now unleashed upon him."<sup>31</sup> Jesus' intense fear in the garden takes the form of heartfelt prayer and sweating drops of blood.

We see also moments of joy in Jesus' life and ministry. The miracle at Cana "is a sign and gift of nuptial joy. This brings to light something of the fulfillment of the Law that is accomplished in Jesus' being and doing."<sup>32</sup> In the Prodigal Son and other parables, one sees Jesus united with the Father in eagerly welcoming back sinful humanity. As the father provides a feast for the lost son, the Church Fathers saw this as an image of a festive Eucharist: "an image of the symphony of the faith, which makes being a Christian a joy and a feast."<sup>33</sup> Jesus' interactions with outcasts and sinners are concrete examples of God's compassionate welcome.

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<sup>30</sup> Benedict, *Jesus of Nazareth. Part Two, Holy Week*, 217.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 155.

<sup>32</sup> Benedict, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism*, 253.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 206.

Zacchaeus the tax collector repents and Jesus dines with him (Luke 19:1-9). Jesus tells the paralytic, “Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven,” and “Get up, take your mat and go home” (Matt 9:1-8). God’s kingship breaks into human history in the person of Jesus.

Jesus has two wills, one human and one divine. These wills are not opposed, but the human will is ordered to the divine will. In Jesus, the natural human will is drawn into the divine will and thus “experiences its fulfillment, not its annihilation.”<sup>34</sup> One sees this in Jesus’ agony in the garden. Wounded humanity experiences this fulfillment through suffering; humans are sanctified through purgation and purification. As the incarnate God, Jesus perfectly fulfills the human condition and extends this sanctification to all of humanity. Humanity shares in his divinity by entering into his humanity—particularly through baptism, to the life of the Church, and by patient suffering.

Jesus is both the sacrament that unites the divine with the human, and the example for all of humanity. He participates fully in our humanity and heals our wounded human nature. In him one can participate in the divine life anew. By emphasizing the role of human participation and divine communion, Benedict has much in common with Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa, and Maximus. Humans are made in the image and likeness of God, the image that is tarnished by sin. Christ recovers and restores this image, “for as the Lord, putting on the body, became man, so we men are made gods [deified] by the Word as being taken to him through his flesh, and henceforward inherit life everlasting.”<sup>35</sup> In the first volume of *Jesus of Nazareth*, Benedict considers the image of the vine in John’s Gospel. Jesus is the true vine, the vine that God had always intended to form from the vineyard of Israel. “He himself has become the vine. He has

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<sup>34</sup> Benedict, *Jesus of Nazareth. Part Two, Holy Week*, 160.

<sup>35</sup> Athanasius. *Against the Arians in Select treatises in controversy with the Arians* (ed. and trans. John Henry Newman; Oxford: J. H. Parker, 1844), 3:34. Brackets mine.

allowed himself to be planted in the earth.”<sup>36</sup> From the vine come the grapes and the wine of joy—life with God. Jesus tells the apostles, “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). God is the lifeblood of humanity; humans can now share in this blood via the humanity that God has joined to himself in the person of Jesus. God always intended for humanity to share in the Trinitarian communion; there is a deep consonance between human nature and the divine nature. By focusing on the image of Jesus as the true vine planted in the vineyard of humanity, Benedict has much in common with Gregory of Nyssa. Gregory likewise shows how humans are made for divinization; this is not added onto human nature, but is an inherent part of humanity. Gregory writes, “Man, who was created to enjoy God’s goodness, had to have some element in his nature akin to what he was to share. Hence, he was endowed with life, reason, wisdom, and all the good things of God...And since immortality is one of the attributes of the divine nature, it was essential that the constitution of our nature should not be deprived of this.”<sup>37</sup> However, in a sinful world, the wine of divine communion is made through the wine press of the cross—through the suffering and death of the Son.

C.3. Jesus’ Cross, Death, Resurrection. This section will examine Benedict’s main theological points regarding Jesus’ passion and resurrection. Here one sees how Benedict’s key Christological themes continue to guide his understanding of the passion and resurrection. For Benedict, the New Testament is a reliable source of historical data about Jesus. It is not merely history, but historical scenes organized for the purpose of evangelization, worship, and communion. Further, Benedict relies on Jesus’ own exegesis of himself in word and deed. Jesus

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<sup>36</sup> Benedict, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism*, 259.

<sup>37</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *An Address on Religious Instruction*, in Hardy, *Christology of the Later Fathers*, #5.

speaks of himself in the context of Jewish themes and symbols. He himself enacts key Jewish rituals. In many ways, Benedict simply allows Jesus' words and actions to speak for themselves, with all the personal and spiritual drama that they contain. This is especially true concerning Jesus' words on the cross, where Benedict makes Jesus' words and actions both understandable and fruitful for contemporary readers. For Benedict, the cross is a historical fact with concrete and spiritual effects for all of us.

Benedict continues to rely on traditional patristic sources as the backbone of his Christology; within this background, he makes use of historical-critical scholarship both to verify the patristics and to make the Scriptures understandable to modern audiences. Also, Benedict continues to emphasize personalism. This focus on personalism is seen in his treatment of Jesus Christ as a living, breathing man; in God's revelation of himself in Jesus; and in Benedict's refrain that personal communion is the true fruit of reconciliation. Benedict's focus on personalism is firmly wedded to Scripture's objective revelation of Jesus' historical actions.

Humanity says "No" to God through sin. This "No" is a rejection of God's plan, God's invitation to relationship with him. God the Son humbled himself to become human in Jesus; so, too, God humbles himself by accepting human death. Jesus' predictions about his death were constantly misunderstood by his closest disciples. Yet his death and resurrection were the content of the earliest proclamations by those same disciples: humanity "put him to death by nailing him to the cross, but God raised him from the dead" (Acts 2:23-24). Jesus' death was also foreshadowed in people's responses to his message. As humanity rejects relationship with God through sin, so, too, many rejected Jesus' message. Herod saw this newborn King as competition against his own kingship, and so killed all of the baby boys in Bethlehem. Pharisees and



Sadducees found Jesus' preaching too soft and unfaithful to the Torah. Pilate felt pressured by the crowds to condemn him.

Benedict notes the difficulty of reconciling an Incarnational theology with a theology of the cross. The Incarnation points toward a spiritual optimism, to the goodness of humanity, and to God's love for us. However, the cross dramatically illustrates humanity's sin, violence, and firm rejection of God. The two theologies "must remain present as polarities that mutually correct each other and only by complementing each other point to the whole" of the Christian mystery.<sup>38</sup> Noting their polarity, Benedict also shows their ultimate continuity in the two volumes of *Jesus of Nazareth*. The first volume essentially deals with the luminous mysteries of Christ, while the second volume addresses the sorrowful mysteries, the Resurrection, and Ascension. Jesus' words and actions in the first volume foreshadow and interpret his suffering, death, and resurrection in the second. The Passion is in full continuity with the Incarnation; Jesus' offering at the Last Supper is in harmony with his ministry of loving self-gift. The Last Supper "has meaning only in relation to something that really happens... Otherwise it would lack real content, like bank notes without funds to cover them. The Lord could say that his Body was 'given' only because he *had* in fact given it" in his Incarnation, throughout his life, and especially on the cross.<sup>39</sup> The verbal prayer at the Last Supper was a vowed consecration of the Son's loving action in the Incarnation, ministry, and Passion.

The Scripture scholar Martin Kähler said that Mark's Gospel is a Passion narrative with an extended introduction. In both volumes of *Jesus of Nazareth*, Benedict carefully shows that all four gospels follow this form. Jesus' ministry is constantly marked by foreshadowings of the

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<sup>38</sup> Benedict, *Introduction to Christianity*, 230. This theme is also addressed in Christopher Collins, *Benedict's Christology, Son of the Father: Logos-Made-Love* (Boston College: unpublished STD dissertation draft, 2011), 31.

<sup>39</sup> Benedict, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, emphasis his, 55.

cross, both in his words and in the response of the hearers. Similarly, the cross and Resurrection are the source of our salvation—in this sense it is an event of great hope, and even joy. This pollination begins in the opening chapters of the gospels. The magi, symbolizing the world's nations, come to worship the newborn King. Herod kills all newborn boys to prevent the “reign” of this new King (Matt 2:1-12). The Incarnation is greeted not with total welcome, but with a clash of both joy and violence. John the Baptist urges repentance for the “vipers” so that they may avoid the coming wrath (Matt 3:7). Jesus likewise calls his opponents a “brood of vipers” in Matt 12:34. This is not simply the cheerful preaching of a simple carpenter, but the Son's apocalyptic call to repentance and contrition, in line with John's call. Those who have eyes to see anticipate the rising tension between Jesus' message and those leaders who wish to silence his urgent command to repent.

Benedict discusses the image of the lamb in both volumes of *Jesus of Nazareth*. In Jesus, personhood and symbol go hand in hand; he is both “a historical figure and a type.”<sup>40</sup> John calls Jesus “the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world” (John 1:29). Benedict sees here an allusion to Isaiah's Suffering Servant, “like a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.”<sup>41</sup> Further, Jesus is the Passover lamb: “The Son who became a servant—the shepherd who became a sheep—no longer stands just for Israel, but for the liberation of the world—for mankind as a whole.”<sup>42</sup> For Benedict, Jesus maintains his personal conscious integrity as he enacts his role as the lamb. This is what makes Jesus different from the lamb of sacrifice in Exodus: Jesus is fully aware that he is going to his death, and freely accepts this reality. In the Synoptic Gospels, the Supper occurs on the Passover itself. In this spiritual sense,

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<sup>40</sup> Benedict, *Jesus of Nazareth. Part Two, Holy Week*, 222. In the text, this quote refers specifically to John and Mary at the foot of the cross, but it also applies to Benedict's treatment of the person of Jesus.

<sup>41</sup> Is 53:7, cited in *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism*, 21.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

Jesus both celebrates the feast and is the feast; he is priest-presider and victim. The Baptist's prophecy of hope regarding the lamb is fulfilled in the violence of the cross. In all of this, one sees Benedict interpreting Jesus' death through the Scriptures and the symbolic world of first century Judaism. In the rich Scriptural imagery of the lamb, Benedict sees the continuity of God's actions and the two Testaments; and he sees Jesus' Passion in continuity with Jesus' whole life and mission.

Peter confesses that Jesus is "the Messiah, the Son of the living God" (Matt 16:16). A few verses later, Jesus tells the apostles that he will be handed over, killed, and then rise on the third day. Peter rebukes him, and then Jesus rebukes Peter. "Peter does not hear the prophecy of the Resurrection. He only registers the reference to death and dispersal...Because he wants to bypass the Cross, he cannot accept the saying about the Resurrection."<sup>43</sup> The conversation is repeated after the Last Supper. This time Peter promises, "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will" (Matt 26:33). Peter misunderstands the Jewish system of atonement and worship. He foolishly believes that he can remain faithful by his own efforts. Yet it is only by dwelling in the faithfulness of Jesus that Peter can share in the reconciliation brought by the Passover that is his Passion.

Jesus is the new and definitive Passover. The first-born lamb of Exodus represents the first-born sons of the Jews. The blood of the lamb will save the sons, as well as save the whole Jewish people from much anguish and loss. A barnyard lamb does all of this unknowingly and unwillingly. Jesus, however, accepts his death with full knowledge and love. Jesus will also "pass over" into the eternal kingdom of his Father. As the divine man, he thereby parts the waters so that we, too, may follow him. In this way, he is both the leading shepherd and the

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 151.

suffering lamb.<sup>44</sup> Benedict also links the inner dynamic of the great Jewish Feast of the Atonement with Jesus' Passion.<sup>45</sup> In a world of sin, humanity is continually thwarted in its attempt to be reconciled with God—even amid the helps of the Jewish faith and covenant. How is humanity supposed to make valid atonement? God must atone for humanity, and through a man in the Incarnate Word.

Benedict further connects the Feast of the Atonement with Jesus' high priestly prayer and his death on the cross. In this prayer, Jesus praises the Father, glorifies him, and asks that the Father glorify the Son "with the glory that I had with you before the world began" (John 17:5). Jesus prays that the Father consecrate his followers in the truth: "I made known to them your name and I will make it known, that the love with which you loved me may be in them and I in them" (John 17:5, 26). On the Day of Atonement, the high priest enters the Holy of Holies to utter God's name as a rite of reconciliation. Jesus' prayer is "the word of him who is '*the Word*,' and so it draws all human words into God's inner dialogue, into his reason and his love."<sup>46</sup> Jesus is drawing all people to himself in his prayer to the Father. Jesus draws all of his followers together in his prayer in John 17, as he has done throughout his earthly ministry. As the Incarnate Son, he has spoken truth, lived truth, drawn followers around himself, and made known the Father's name in word and deed. The climax of Jesus' work is the cross. Passover and the Day of Atonement are two great feasts in Jewish worship. Now the two feasts are united in the person of Jesus. God will go the whole way for humanity. The high priest's prayer is not mere words, but

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<sup>44</sup> See *The Spirit of the Liturgy*; and *Jesus of Nazareth. Part Two, Holy Week*, and others.

<sup>45</sup> Benedict, *Jesus of Nazareth, Part Two, Holy Week*, 76-103.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, emphasis his, 80.

words spoken by the Word. And “the Word is now flesh, and not only that: it is his body offered up, his blood poured out.”<sup>47</sup>

Jesus gives further theological and ritual interpretation to his death at the Last Supper. Jesus says the cup is his blood, poured out for “you/all/many,” depending on the particular gospel. Benedict sees a unity in all of these options: “Recent theology has rightly underlined the use of the word ‘for’... his entire being is expressed by the word ‘pro-existence’—he is there, not for himself, but for others.”<sup>48</sup> The eternally begotten Son pours out himself in love before time began. He continues this pouring as the Incarnate Son—for the Father and for sinful humanity. The Father receives his offering in love and joy. Humanity takes Jesus’ offering as an opportunity for control and violence. Nevertheless, in a life of pure love, in “taking men’s ‘no’ upon himself drawing it into his ‘yes,’”<sup>49</sup> Jesus enacts and embodies the reconciliation that God and humanity so desire. It is in this sense that one should understand the previous section on the divine and human wills of Jesus: the two wills are distinct but united, and in this way Jesus purifies and perfects human will.

Jesus’ whole mission is both sacrament and model. He achieves our salvation, and invites us to share in his saving work by imitating him. Citing the Church Fathers, Benedict says that “by *sacramentum*, they mean not any particular sacrament, but rather the entire mystery of Christ—his life and death—in which he draws close to us, enters us through his Spirit, and transforms us.”<sup>50</sup> In this way, he can tell the apostles to imitate him. When Jesus tells the apostles, “Do this in memory of me” (Luke 22:19), he is asking them to imitate his actions at the Eucharist and his whole way of being and acting. Receiving his body in the Eucharist makes

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 134.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 123.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 62.

Jesus' followers more fully the Body of Christ. Through the Eucharist, "Jesus' action becomes ours, because he is acting in us."<sup>51</sup>

Benedict notes Jesus' continued words of reconciliation, even when nailed to the cross. This again shows the hopefulness of the cross, the continuity of the cross and Incarnation, of the Incarnation and the unbegotten *Logos*-Son. Jesus continues to pray aloud on the cross: "Father forgive them" (Luke 23:34). He strengthens the nascent Church by giving Mary to John and John to Mary. Even in death, Jesus pours out blood and water from his side. Here Benedict cites the familiar patristic symbolism of Eucharist and Baptism: "This is the new outpouring that creates the Church and renews mankind."<sup>52</sup>

In the Resurrection, it is precisely Jesus' wounds that are now a source of recognition and hope. Thomas is invited to place his fingers into the nail marks and into Jesus' pierced side (John 20:27). In Luke's Gospel, the Risen Christ tells the disciples in Jerusalem, "Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me and see" (24:39). God's love is stronger than death. Through his Incarnation, life, Passion, death, and Resurrection, Jesus has opened a way to the Father. By humbling himself in death on the cross, Christ glorifies the Father and sanctifies humanity. "The Shepherd takes the lost sheep onto his shoulders and carries it home."<sup>53</sup>

Jesus' ascent into heaven, his *reditus*, means that he continues to glorify humanity, which is now and henceforth united with the Trinity in communal love. He does not leave his disciples alone, but sends them the Spirit to guide them, to enflame them, and to empower them to live as an ever-present "remembering" of all Jesus did and taught. He blesses as he ascends: "The gesture of hands outstretched in blessing expresses Jesus' continuing relationship to his disciples,

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 226.

<sup>53</sup> Benedict, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 61.

to the world. In departing, he comes to us, in order to raise us up above ourselves and to open up the world to God. That is why the disciples could return home from Bethany rejoicing.”<sup>54</sup>

#### **D. Conclusion.**

Benedict’s Christology can thus be set forth in a “top-down” fashion. The eternal *Logos* is the only begotten Son. The Trinity of Persons exist in eternal loving communion. Through the Son, the Father creates the world and makes a covenant with humanity. The Son of God becomes the Son of Mary. The Son descends to become a man so that all of humanity may ascend with him. When the Son of God becomes the Son of Man, he paves the way for humanity’s *reditus*; in him, all people can return to the Trinity in lasting communion. Humanity’s *reditus* in Christ via the Eucharist will be explored further in Chapter 2. Ignatius’s utilization of the *reditus* movement in the *Spiritual Exercises* will be explored in Chapter 3. The Son’s way of pouring out himself in love in the Incarnation continues in his life and culminates with his crucifixion. In all of this, Benedict relies on the faith received from God’s personal revelation. God speaks through the historical words and events recorded in the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit guides the Church to clarify belief and doctrine through councils and creeds. God’s revelation is not just informational, but personal. Jesus is truly God.

Benedict’s Christology is not isolated. It is closely related to, indeed is in continuity with, his Eucharistic theology. “Just as the Lord entered the Holy City that day on a donkey, so too the Church saw him coming again and again in the humble form of bread and wine” at Eucharist.<sup>55</sup> Jesus brings the nations to God in the Church, as Gentiles receive baptism and gather at Mass.

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<sup>54</sup> Benedict, *Jesus of Nazareth. Part Two, Holy Week*, 293.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

## Chapter 2: Benedict's Eucharistic Theology

This chapter considers Benedict's Eucharistic theology, using *The Spirit of the Liturgy* as the main source. This book provides a systematic blueprint to help understand and organize the different parts of the *Exercises*. But one must first understand *The Spirit of the Liturgy* on its own terms. This is the project of Chapter 2 as we move from Christology through liturgy to spirituality. Benedict shows how Christian liturgy is in continuity with Jewish liturgy, while also fulfilling it. "Creation, history, and worship are in a relationship of reciprocity."<sup>56</sup> For Christians, the Exodus, the Last Supper, the cross, and the Resurrection constitute key moments of revelation in salvation history. These past events are brought into the present in the liturgy; through the Eucharist Christians are drawn into the Son's *reditus*, and experience communion with the Trinity. The rite of sending concludes the Mass; this is a sharing in the Son's loving *exitus*, whereby the faithful are sent out: "Go forth, the Mass is ended."<sup>57</sup> Having shared in Christ's *reditus* at Mass, the faithful are sent in *exitus* to share Christ's communion with others as they go forward in life. In the Eucharist Christians anticipate and even have a foretaste of the future, the fullness of the Kingdom. The Church and liturgy thus exist in an "in-between" time. Humanity has begun the ascent, but it is not yet complete. The Eucharist is "the entry of the eternal into our present moment in the liturgical action."<sup>58</sup> Liturgy is fulfilled when God has finally taken hold "of the worshipper's life and ultimately of all historical reality."<sup>59</sup> This "taking hold" begins in this life.

For Benedict, Christian liturgy is in continuity with God's covenantal communion with humanity, as seen in Chapter 1. In this sense, the liturgy flows from Trinitarian love through

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<sup>56</sup> Benedict. *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 27.

<sup>57</sup> *Roman Missal*, 2011.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*



God's action in creation—especially the Incarnation—which mingles with our present, and leads us to God in heaven. Liturgy is a gift from God that leads people back to God. Christian liturgy builds on Jewish and pagan worship, while universalizing these earlier forms. In this way creation, history, and worship reciprocate one another. True worship harnesses the whole cosmos into the liturgical dance of redemption.

Benedict is frequently a “theologian in a hurry,” addressing particular pastoral liturgical problems, but without the leisure to offer a comprehensive Eucharistic theology. He has a tendency to place a provocative idea before the reader without explaining all of the implications. As a comprehensive analysis of his thought would require many volumes, in this chapter I will highlight and explain his major points, connect them to his Christology, and show his unique contribution to the tradition. As in Chapter 1, I will follow his “top-down” approach, which follows God's action in human history. Benedict's Eucharistic theology uses several technical terms and three-stage processes. Many of these are commonly used in the field, but he places his distinctive mark on each one. These will be discussed below. As in his Christology, Benedict relies heavily on Scripture in his Eucharistic theology—especially upon Christ's own words and actions. Note Benedict's continued reliance on patristic sources as he emphasizes the intrinsic personalism of the liturgy. Because the three stages of “*semper* and *semel*” align well with Benedict's Christology, I will use this framework as the organizing structure of this chapter. Other terms will be addressed within these three stages. The first stage covers Benedict's theology of the Trinity and his Christology. Since the bulk of this was covered in Chapter 1, I will review only a few of his main themes and then apply these to the liturgy. The second stage is the “real liturgical level” for Benedict, and discussion of this stage will constitute the longest part of this chapter. While Christians can only experience the third stage in heaven, they can have a

foretaste of it now in liturgy. I will consider the experience of liturgical anticipation and hope in the third part.

### **A. The First Stage: The Eternal is Embodied in What is Once-for-All.**

As seen in Chapter 1, the immanent Trinity is a *semper* communion of Persons in continual self-emptying love. In love, God creates the universe and humanity to be in covenant with the Trinity. The bulk of this section was covered in Chapter 1. Here I will review the major themes and connect them to liturgy. To represent the deity, pagan religions often used a circle, a shape without beginning or end, having no parts. “The nature religions and many non-Christian philosophies think of it as a movement of unceasing repetition.”<sup>60</sup> To be sure, pagans captured an element of truth in their use of the circle: God is unchanging and infinite; God always was and always shall be. Christian theology shares some sense of this *semper*, cyclic image of God. Before creation, the Father begets the Son in an act of self-giving. This is the eternal, non-historic *exitus* and *reditus*. The Son is “God from God and Light from Light;” he is of the very substance of the Father. The Son departs from the Father only to return to him in total love and obedience. The Father’s begetting is an act of pure love; he does this not by necessity, but freely. The Father does not re-absorb the Son but honors the Son’s unique personhood—with each person holding the other in a kind of loving, respectful tension. The Son’s *semper* imitates the Father’s gift. The Son continually receives the Father’s love, and responds with his own gift of self-emptying love.

The Trinitarian *exitus* and *reditus* is continued in creation. This is the Creator’s free act of creation. God freely creates the universe and humanity in an act of free self-giving. The fall is

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<sup>60</sup> Benedict, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 29.

tantamount to humanity “saying ‘No’ to the *reditus*. Love is seen as dependence and is rejected.”<sup>61</sup> God offers a number of revelations, prophets, leaders, teachings, and covenants to humanity after the fall. Each of these gifts is an invitation for humanity’s *reditus*, his loving return to God. Each offer is uniquely graced, but also botched by humanity. The Trinity’s internal rhythm of self-gift becomes human in the *semel* act of the Incarnation. By *semel*, “once,” Benedict does not mean a chance, fluke event. Rather, he points to Bernard of Clairvaux’s use of *ephapax*, which means “once for all.”<sup>62</sup> *Semel* is a deliberate, one-time event that is intended to have lasting implications. The phrase “let’s settle this once-and-for-all” roughly captures the meaning. The *semper* Son of God becomes the *semel* Son of Mary.

The Incarnate Son continues his humble, loving relationship with the Father while on earth. Unlike sinful humanity, Jesus freely acknowledges, “I came from the Father and entered the world and... [am] going back to the Father” (John 16:28). In a fallen world, Jesus became obedient to death, even death on a cross (Phil 2:8). In word and deed, Jesus humbly models the Trinity’s infinite, internal life of love. The *Logos* is the perfect *reditus* even before the time of creation; in giving himself he “becomes fully” himself.<sup>63</sup> In the Incarnation, the *semper* becomes *semel*. He invites humanity into the Trinity’s divine life, even to the point of freely carrying the cross and dying on it. The cross is like a wooden stake driven into the earth, marking the total in-breaking of divine love. The cross breaks through both the earth’s circular repetitions and the seemingly endless timeline of world history. “I AM” has become man; in Jesus, the eternal God became man, died, and was raised to save humanity.

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>63</sup> “The being of the other is not absorbed or abolished, but rather, in giving itself, it becomes fully itself.” Ibid., 33. Benedict is referring here to creatures, and humans in particular. For him, this outpouring of self to God is the ground of our being. In this way Christ is the model; and Christ continues on earth the pattern that the Son has lived for all eternity. The phrase “becomes fully” only approximates the *Logos*, since the *Logos* is perfect and does not become “more perfect.”

While the arc from *exitus* to *reditus* is broken in the fall, Jesus heals it in the Incarnation and Passion.<sup>64</sup> Worship now takes on a new aspect: with God healing humanity's wounded freedom. This is the meaning of terms such as atonement, purification, and deliverance—God is working a loving transformation of humanity's broken freedom.<sup>65</sup> The Passion is in full continuity with the Incarnation; the Last Supper offering is in harmony with Jesus' whole ministry; the Son pours himself out to the Father and the same Son pours himself out in the Eucharistic sacrifice. The Last Supper “has meaning only in relation to something that really happens...Otherwise it would lack real content, like bank notes without funds to cover them. The Lord could say that his Body was “given” only because he *had* in fact given it”<sup>66</sup> in his Incarnation, life, and on the cross. The verbal prayer at the Last Supper was a vowed consecration of the Word's loving action in the Incarnation, ministry, and Passion.

One may ask, “Why do we need liturgy?” Through the Incarnation and Passion, humanity is saved and reconciled to God. One may suggest that Christians need only the sacrament of baptism to enter into Christ's saving action, and thus all other forms of liturgical worship can be abandoned. However, entering fully into God's covenant means “full, conscious, active participation” on the part of humans. Christ's humanity opens up a new way for humans to cooperate in his divine activity. Salvation is not just a ticket to heaven; salvation means a personal relationship with the eternal God of love. At Eucharistic benediction, the priest prays, “May our worship of this sacrament of your Body and Blood help us to *experience* the salvation you won for us.” God reveals the outlines of Christian worship to grow in communion and experience salvation. Further, salvation is just not for individuals but is communal. In sharing

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 55, emphasis his.

true communion with God, one shares communion with others. In the Old Testament, God promises Israel, “you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Exod 19:6). This promise is fulfilled in Christ and through the Church. God gives humans freedom, and wants them to enter freely into relationship with him. Humans are not rocks or plants that can be moved and altered without consent. The loving, Triune, personal God wants a loving personal relationship with human persons.

Liturgy is a multifaceted gem. It unites the faithful together as community and to God. Humans are prone to forgetfulness and backsliding. Liturgy is a remedy that reminds Christians of God’s saving action in human history—especially through Abraham, Moses and the Exodus, and the Christ-event. Liturgy reminds humanity of God’s ongoing invitation to covenantal relationship. Liturgy allows Christians to participate freely in the gift of salvation. Liturgy harnesses the natural world and all of human culture to the service of worshipping the one true God. Scripture, song, art, procession, gesture, food, incense, rhetoric, memory, thought, and emotion are all brought into the divine liturgy. Human voices blend with the angels in the *Sanctus* as Christians join in the angels’ unending hymn of praise. God knows what humanity needs. Through Scripture and tradition he instructs Christians how to worship him so that they can receive what they need—himself, the Incarnate Son, the personal Triune God.

## **B. The Second Stage: The Entry of the Eternal into Our Present Moment in the Liturgical Action.**<sup>67</sup>

We are now positioned to analyze “the real liturgical level” of Benedict’s thought. This section will begin with a general discussion of worship, starting with pagan worship. It will

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 60.

proceed to outline the different forms of Jewish worship and show how these are fulfilled in Christ. In the first stage above, the initiative and action is entirely God's. The Father begets the Son, the Son responds with love. God creates the universe and humanity. Humans respond by rejecting God in the fall, and then further rejecting the Son in the Passion. The patriarchs and prophets obey God by degrees, but Mary models perfect faith. Her "fiat" allows the Word to become Incarnate in the world. At the Last Supper, Jesus' total self-offering is liturgically sacramentalized. He continues to give himself to the Father for us, even to the point of death. He does this on our behalf as the Divine Man. His command, "Do this in memory of me," is a commission to make his one-of-a-kind, never-to-be-repeated *semel* events into an ongoing *semper*. In some sense we have now come full circle. The *semper* Son has become *semel* human and now invites all people to continue his *semper* sacramental offering, "until the end of time" (Matt 28:20). But we must not be overly hasty. The second stage is "the liturgically making present, the real liturgical level."<sup>68</sup>

How does the eternal enter into our present moment? This occurs through the remembering of the Passion of the Incarnate One in the sacramental, liturgical action of Eucharist. This is only done "through him, with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit." In the Eucharist, "past and present penetrate one another in this way, if the essence of the past is not simply a thing of the past but the far-reaching power of what follows in the present."<sup>69</sup> In the Eucharist, Christians celebrate the entire Incarnation and Passion, not just the Last Supper. "In Jesus' self-surrender on the Cross, the Word is united with the entire reality of human life and suffering."<sup>70</sup> He is the shepherd who has gathered the lambs in his arms and taken them to

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 47.

himself, their true home. “His self-giving is meant to become mine, so that I become contemporary with the Pasch of Christ and assimilated unto God.”<sup>71</sup>

B.1. Jewish Worship: Three Forms. Benedict points out that Jewish worship in the Old Testament has three primary forms.<sup>72</sup> Understanding Jewish worship is necessary in order to see how Christ fulfills and manifests these three forms. This will also help to show what is distinct about Christian liturgical worship. In receiving Jesus’ Body and becoming his Body more completely at the Mass, Christians are empowered to fulfill all three forms in an integrated and wholesome manner.

B.1.1. Liturgical Priestly Sacrifice. This is probably what most Christians think of when they hear the phrase “Old Testament worship.” This is the liturgical worship rooted in the exodus and the Passover meal prescriptions, though it is foreshadowed by earlier figures. Abel offered God “fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock” (Gen 4:3-4). When God made a covenant with Abram, “the LORD said to him, ‘Bring me a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon.’ Abram brought all these to him, cut them in two and arranged the halves opposite each other” (Gen 15:9-10). When God tested Abraham, he brought Isaac up the mountain to sacrifice him. When the angel ordered him not to harm his son, Abraham saw a ram caught in a bush, “took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son” (Gen 22:13).

At the exodus event, God ordered Moses and each Hebrew family to take a year-old male lamb and “slaughter them at twilight. Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses... eat the meat roasted over the fire” (Exod 12:5-

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>72</sup> *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 36-45. I have elaborated on his framework, named specific scriptural examples, and included themes relevant to this paper.

8). While the exodus occurred only once, all Israelites are instructed to observe this ritual feast annually. “For the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD... In the first month you are to eat bread made without yeast, from the evening of the fourteenth day until the evening of the twenty-first day” (Exod 12:14, 18). This worship was continued and reached a highpoint in the Jerusalem Temple.

What is the significance of this kind of Jewish worship? For modern Christians, animal sacrifice may sound like stereotypical pagan worship. Israel was certainly part of the Ancient Near Eastern culture. God worked through Ancient Near East cultural forms. Israel’s ritual sacrifice was a way of renewing the covenant with God. “Moses then took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, ‘This is the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words’” (Exod 24:8). Israel saw God as powerful, good, and firmly “on their side.” God rescued the Hebrew people from Egypt, led them through the desert, gave them quail and bread to eat, and gave them a new home “flowing with milk and honey” (3:8). Remembering God’s great actions, celebrating them regularly, and deepening their own commitment to God was a great consolation to the Jewish people.

The Jews did not dream up this worship on their own, but were faithfully obeying the commands that God gave them. In this way, liturgical worship is distinct from other forms of worship. Liturgy is an ordered set of religious actions that takes place in a communal, public setting. Different ministers have distinct roles, including cantor, priest, acolyte, etc. One may worship God alone in personal prayer; however, one cannot worship God privately in liturgy. Liturgy is ordered toward a community’s relationship with God and is the “face” of religion to



the outside world. Liturgical worship is in a complementary relationship with other forms of worship, as shown below.

B.1.2. Prophetic. The prophets criticized Israel's sinfulness and hearkened to a day when the Temple sacrifices would be performed with renewed devotion. "'The days are coming,' says the LORD, 'when I will fulfill the gracious promise I made to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah.... nor will the priests, who are Levites, ever fail to have a man to stand before me continually to offer burnt offerings'" (Jer 33:14, 18). Isaiah pointed to a time when even the Egyptians "will acknowledge the LORD, and they will worship with sacrifices" (19:21). In the Old Testament, prophets spoke about the past, present, and future. They reminded others of what God had already done, they interpreted current events according to the divine plan, and they warned about future consequences while pointing to a time when God would reign in glory. While the Temple sacrifices were typically carried out with reverence and attention to detail, many Israelites were gradually wandering into idolatry, injustice, and other serious sins. The prophets tapped into Israel's nagging concern: What if we so offend God that he abandons us? Prophets encouraged the people to return to the Torah and challenged their weak faith. "Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, who rely on horses...but do not look to the Holy One of Israel, or seek help from the LORD" (Isa 31:1). For this reason, many prophets were hated and rejected by the people.

Notice the dynamic interplay—a kind of "check and balance"—that goes on in between these first two forms of worship. For example, Moses sprinkles the blood and speaks God's word, acting as both priest and prophet. Many of the prophets participated in ritual sacrifices and enjoyed the favor of the kings and chief priests. Yet one who speaks the word of God is destined to be treated in the same way that God's word is treated. In a sinful world, the prophets are

ignored, misunderstood, mocked, and abused. In this sense, the prophets share in the worship of “obedient suffering” that will be discussed below.

Today, Christian readers usually view the prophets as emphasizing ethics and social justice, while criticizing Temple worship. One example of this is in Isaiah: “Defend the cause of the orphan, plead the case of the widow” (1:17). In another place the prophet Samuel says to King Saul, “More precious than sacrifice is obedience, submission better than the fat of rams!” (1 Sam 15:22). Through Hosea God repeats the prophetic refrain: “For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice” (6:6). One may be led to ask, how do the prophets worship God? Perhaps many people think of worship primarily as praying aloud together in a sacred space. For Israel the Torah was an all-encompassing reality. God’s Law guided their liturgical worship, and also their eating and drinking, service to the poor, and family life. Today, one might call this “living the faith in daily life.” The prophets preached a return to the Law. Even Isaiah’s plea to protect the widow was merely echoing the Torah: “Do not take advantage of a widow or an orphan. If you do and they cry out to me, I will certainly hear their cry” (Exod 22:22-23). The Torah, the Wisdom books, and the prophetic books complement one another and form a coherent whole. The ethical system found in the Old Testament is a gift from God. The Jews are meant to be a light to the nations; their way of life has meaning for the entire human race. Moreover, the broader Greek philosophical tradition of *Logos* and ethics is coherent with the Law. This is important for the universality of Scriptural revelation.

B.1.3. Obedient Suffering. How does one worship God through suffering? In the Old Testament, humble faithfulness is contrasted with hard-heartedness. Pharaoh’s hard heart prevented him from listening to Moses and the cries of the Hebrew people. God promises to welcome sinners; when their “hearts are humbled... I will remember my covenant” (Lev 26:41-

42). The poor and suffering often have an acute awareness that they are utterly dependent on God; whereas the rich and powerful often trust in themselves and ignore God. The prophets thought that Israel's defeat at the hands of the Babylonians was actually an opportunity to turn back to God with renewed trust and humility. Psalm 137 captures Israel's humility in defeat: "By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion. There on the poplars we hung our harps, for there our captors asked us for songs" (vv.1-3). And yet, even here, there was hope of a restored Jerusalem: "May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember you, if I do not consider Jerusalem my highest joy!" (v. 6).

Obedient suffering is frequently linked to prophecy to the proclamation of God's word. The prophets often suffer when they preach God's word to a disobedient people. Jeremiah says, "the LORD revealed their plot to me... he showed me what they were doing. I had been like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter" (Jer 11:18-19). In 2 Maccabees, Eleazar is persecuted at the hands of pagan rulers who wanted him to abandon the Law. He was being forced to open his mouth to eat pork. "But preferring a glorious death to a life of defilement, he spat out the meat" (6:19).

At Mass during Holy Week, one hears the suffering servant songs of Isaiah. This mysterious figure was "pierced for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed" (Isa 53:5). This servant suffered because of his faithfulness and redeemed those who persecuted him. Isaiah's suffering servant is consistent with the above examples in which the poor and righteous likewise suffer. In all of these examples, a person is oppressed and rejected by the world, yet honored and exalted by God. In many ways, this is the whole experience of the Jewish people. The glory days of David's kingship are bracketed by centuries of oppression by multiple occupiers. The prophets

even suffered at the hands of fellow Jews. The mysterious Man of Sorrows in Isaiah is a shadowy figure who personifies Israel's experience of persecution and injury. Yet, somehow, precisely through suffering Israel is sanctified.

As seen in this section, the three Jewish forms of worship are closely related. Prophecy is closely associated with the Israelite's Temple worship, as the prophets called for a return to the Torah so that Israel might offer sacrifice with pure hearts. The prophets also frequently suffered because they proclaimed God's word. In the next section, we will examine Christ's participation in these three forms of Jewish worship in the New Testament. Benedict explains how, in Christ, all three forms of Jewish worship converge and are fulfilled. Through Benedict's analysis, we will see how Jesus deliberately takes on all three forms of Jewish worship and thereby universalizes worship for the nations.

## B.2. Christ Fulfills Jewish Worship.

B.2.1. Christ as Priest, Temple, Sacrifice, and God. Christ calls himself the Temple and takes on the symbolic religious meaning associated with it. "Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days'" (John 2:19). Jesus cleanses the Jerusalem Temple by driving out the money changers; in this action, he both purifies the Temple and critiques those who use it for political ends.<sup>73</sup> As the new Temple Jesus makes himself the house of prayer and sacrifice. As the new Temple Jesus is the dwelling place of God on earth. The Jerusalem Temple was a holy and solemn place where one worshipped the divine. John the Baptist calls him the "Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). At the Last Supper Jesus acts as a priest offering sacrifice—and the sacrificial offering is himself. "This is my blood of the

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<sup>73</sup> N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, (London: SPCK, 1996), 413-428.

covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” (Matt 26:28). With his own blood, Jesus renews the Mosaic covenant—sealing the bond between God and humanity, and forgiving human sin. Jesus builds upon Jewish religious symbols and practices, while uniquely applying them to himself. In doing so, he universalizes the Jewish symbolic world, now making it accessible to the Gentile world.

B.2.2. Christ the Prophet. Jesus’ teachings, including his ethical concerns, were consistent with earlier Jewish prophets. Israel was often symbolized as a vineyard in the Old Testament. “The vineyard of the Lord Almighty is the house of Israel” (Isa 5:7). Jesus said, “The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers to work in his vineyard” (Matt 20:1). Like the prophets, Jesus saw himself as faithful to the Torah, calling Israel to renew their commitment to the Law. “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them... You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment” (Matt 5:17, 22a).<sup>74</sup> Prophets typically prefaced their statements with “Thus says the Lord.” However, Jesus speaks with his own authority, as in the above statements from Matthew 5:21-48. Jesus said to the paralytic, “Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven” (Matt 9:2). Yet acting as prophet, he did something very unusual—preaching that he was the fulfillment of his own prophecy. “Unrolling the scroll, he found the place where it is written: ‘The Spirit of the Lord is on me...’ and he began by saying to them, ‘Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing’” (Luke 4:17-18, 21).

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<sup>74</sup> See Matt 5:21-48.

In all of these ways, Jesus built upon the tradition of Old Testament prophets. He called his listeners to be faithful to the Law, both internally and externally. His direct challenges to his hearers brought him abundant persecution: [they] “took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him down the cliff” (Luke 4:29). Even in drawing such persecution, his life and teachings were consistent with the prophetic call to a “living worship.”

B.2.3. Christ the Obedient, Suffering Righteous One. For many Catholics this is a familiar image of Jesus, though at times it may seem confusing and uncomfortable. In Matthew 16, Jesus explains to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem “and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life” (v. 21). At the Last Supper Jesus united his suffering with the coming of God’s Kingdom: “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God” (Luke 22:15-16). On the cross, Jesus quoted the suffering, faithful psalmist: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Mark 15:34, cf. Ps 22:1). As the living, suffering sacrifice, Jesus united his obedience with the priestly worship discussed above. In all of this, Jesus continued his pattern of obeying the Father and placing everything in his hands. He prayed to his Father, “not my will, but yours be done” (Luke 22:42). Jesus is the full continuity with the faithful poor and suffering prophets who went before him.

We must remember that his suffering is united with his prophetic and his priestly character and action. This is not merely the random suffering of an innocent bystander. Jesus predicted his own death and freely accepted the cross. He offered himself in the face of his Jewish and Roman persecutors. On the cross he embodied his words from the Last Supper, “This is my body, given up for you.” The righteous servant has served God *and* humanity. His blood

poured out brings the whole world into everlasting covenant with God. Discussing the meaning and fruit of Jesus' death and resurrection could fill many more hours and pages. In brief, his action is a type of worship "in deed" that is closely related to the two other forms of worship that he performs.

In all of these ways, one sees Jesus uniting in himself the main forms of Old Testament worship. These were connected in the Old Testament—for example, prophets who desired devout Temple sacrifices suffered. Jesus builds on these forms and fulfills what they hoped for. Jesus is priest, Temple, and sacrifice. He is prophet and the Lord of whom the prophets spoke. He is the suffering servant and the God who blesses those who suffer.

B.3. Replacement Worship. Many Ancient Near Eastern cultures celebrated fertility rituals for good flocks in the spring, as well as feasts of thanksgiving for good harvests in the fall. The Jewish people were part of this cultural milieu, yet their feasts were transformed through God's revelation in their history. In discussing the feast of Passover Benedict draws on a rich collection of images, linking creation and history.<sup>75</sup> In the spring the sun passes through the first part of the Zodiac—the sign of Aries, the ram. The Jews traditionally marked March 25 as the date of Abraham's sacrifice of the ram in the presence of his son Isaac. The lengthening of days in the northern hemisphere means not simply a new year, but the beginning of new life with God in the promised land of Israel. Further, Passover is celebrated on a night when the moon is full because the moon allowed Moses and the people to escape Egypt under cover of night, yet with sufficient light to guide their journey. In all of this, moon, stars, sun, and earth are beautifully, logically ordered and brought into the drama of God's action in human history. To be sure, Benedict's claims are complex and each one requires a lengthy defense, both

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<sup>75</sup> Benedict, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 98-111.

Scripturally and historically. However, what is clear is Benedict's conviction that these connections are inherent in the exodus narrative and Jewish worship. In a mystical sense both the ram sacrificed by Abraham and the Passover lamb were foreshadowed by Aries, even before human history!<sup>76</sup> If written by another theologian, this claim may sound like neopagan nonsense. But for Benedict this is an example of God's eternal wisdom, revealed slowly in history and reaching fulfillment in Christ. Christ, the Lamb of God, deliberately takes all of this imagery to himself, fulfilling and perfecting these natural and religious events. The divine *Logos* created a logical, ordered creation. Creation is not random, nor is it simply an endlessly cycling repetition. "It is itself movement, from its one beginning to its one end. In a sense, creation *is* history."<sup>77</sup> One need not write nature "into" Christian liturgy to make worship relevant and compelling because God himself brings nature into worship to perfect humanity and nature—precisely through humanity's thoughtful, logical *Logos* worship. "Now if worship, rightly understood, is the soul of the covenant, then it not only saves mankind but is also meant to draw the whole of reality into communion with God."<sup>78</sup>

Recall Benedict's statement which we previously examined: "Creation, history, and worship are in a relationship of reciprocity."<sup>79</sup> True worship brings the whole cosmos into the liturgical dance of redemption. Through revelation, God himself outlined true worship for Jews and for Christians. Benedict sees a three-step process at work in Jewish religious feast days. Jewish feasts originate from celebrations of nature religion and thus tell of Creator and creation. These feasts then become remembrances of God's actions in history. Finally, they become feasts of hope, which strain forward to meet the Lord who is coming, thereby reconciling the whole of

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 99-100.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 28, emphasis his.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 27

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.



creation.<sup>80</sup> Jews have various interpretations of how the Lord will do this—either by himself or through a Messiah figure. Christians see Christ as the Incarnate *Logos*-Son who reconciles humanity to God.

Benedict sees a positive development in the history of religion from pagan worship through Judaism to Christian worship. God acts like a good schoolteacher to lead humanity forward. “The first change cut away idols but allowed sacrifices to remain; the second stripped away sacrifices but did not forbid circumcision.”<sup>81</sup> Patristic sources help one to see how the early Church received and enacted Christ’s command, “Do this in memory of me.” In receiving and enacting his command, Christians enter into Christ’s *reditus* and share communion with the Trinity. The Son went out in the *exitus* of the Incarnation to return with humanity in his *reditus*. Christians are then sent out into the world to share Christ’s communion with others—so that all may finally share in his loving *reditus*. God has revealed to humanity how he desires to be worshipped; God has given humanity the means of worshipping in Christ. The goal of worship is relationship with the Trinitarian God.

B.3.1. Shadow, Image, Type. The Church Fathers outline three stages of revelation: shadow, image, type. Benedict sees these terms as loosely corresponding to the nature-history-worship dynamic outlined. The term “shadow” denotes both an unclarity as well as a foreshadowing. God’s “shadow” in creation includes creating humanity in God’s image and likeness. Nature religions likewise exhibit a shadowy understanding of God and the world in their sacrifices and rituals. However, the Fathers use “shadow” to refer more directly to Old Testament revelation and prophecy. One example of this shadow revelation is how Moses

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<sup>80</sup> Benedict, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism*, 307.

<sup>81</sup> Benedict, *Jesus of Nazareth. Part Two, Holy Week*, 34. Benedict cites Gregory Nazianzen, *Oration 31*, “On the Holy Spirit,” #25.

paradoxically both sees and does not see God's face. God speaks to Moses face to face, yet God told Moses, "I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. Then I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but my face must not be seen" (Exod 33:11, 22-23). Moses' face glowed after his encounters with God, frightening the Israelites, who then insisted that Moses veil his face (Exod 34:29-35). Another example of shadow revelation is the Temple. The Temple contains the Holy of Holies, but the curtain separates God from humanity and conceals God from humanity. Even while the Jews fulfilled the detailed cultic prescriptions, their actions were often starkly at odds with the revelation of the Law. God criticizes this hypocrisy, saying through the prophets, "I hate, I despise your religious festivals; your assemblies are a stench to me" (Amos 5:21). There is a perplexing tension in the shadow stage: the Jews cannot do what they must do to remain in covenant—that is, obey God's prescriptions and commandments. They cannot overcome this stumbling block on their own, even with help from their liturgies and prophets.

According to this patristic shema, in the Church the shadow has been scattered by the image: "the night is far gone, the day is at hand."<sup>82</sup> The term "image" denotes both newness and renewal. Jesus Christ is the true image that fulfills all of the "shadow" revelations of the Old Testament. In Christ humanity's image, tarnished by sin, has recovered its luster. The Son is the true image of the Father and becomes man in Jesus. By sharing in Jesus' life and death, Christians can become fully human and share in the divine life of the Trinity. Christians may be tempted to see this as the full, final revelation of God. However, the "sun is rising, but it still has not reached its zenith."<sup>83</sup> Jesus' closest followers often misunderstood him and even rejected him. Through ignorance and sin, people do the same today. In Christ, humanity still lives in an

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 54, citing Rom 13:12.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 54.

in-between time. All remain in the world of the “image” and not yet the world of “type.” Now is a time of mediation, symbols, liturgy, and worship. Christians live and worship rightly only “through him, with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit.” The final stage, that of “type,” is fulfilled only in the final coming of the Kingdom, where God is all in all. The Kingdom is breaking into our world, but is not yet fully revealed nor is it recognized. In the Eucharist Christians anticipate and receive a foretaste of the future, their *reditus* into the fullness of the Kingdom. Christian liturgy thus maintains the Jewish element of anticipation and hope.

In contemporary culture Christians must combat a kind of historical positivism that says, “fine, but that all happened 2000 years ago.” This is a notion that the past is locked in the past, inaccessible and almost meaningless now. In fact, no person is pure, isolated matter; no individual act is wholly separated from the larger world. Humans are social beings. They are body, mind, and spirit (1 Thess 5:23). Mind and spirit allow one to choose an action while remembering the past, with an eye to the future. The body allows one to act in the present. But even the human body has continuity with the past and future. I am physically similar to my father, and the boy I was at age fifteen is in continuity with the man I will be at age fifty. The cross is a dramatic, powerful, thoughtful action. The Jewish and Roman antagonists responsible for Jesus’ demise expected that his death would have consequences—vanquishing a phony king, and teaching a lesson to others who might imitate his seditious claims.

An example will illustrate these points. As I look through old photos of the American Civil War, I share a kind of participation in those events through my imagination, wonder, and emotions. “Medicine was so poor in those days! And they marched everywhere, since there were few horses and no vehicles!” I know veterans of other wars, and I understand their stories. I was not at the Civil War, but it happened in my country and shaped my nation’s history and psyche—

including me. *A fortiori* this is true for the Eucharist. For Christians Jesus is not just a figure in history but the Incarnate Son of God. His self-offering was deliberate, thoughtful, and dramatic. No one took his life, but he laid it down of his own accord (John 10:18). “It is a spiritual act that takes up the bodily unto itself, that embraces the whole man...Just as the pain of the body is drawn into the pathos of the mind and becomes the Yes of obedience, so time is drawn into what reaches beyond time.”<sup>84</sup>

As Jesus is human and divine, so too is the Eucharist an event that is both human and divine. Eucharist occurs in time but also draws the faithful into the mystery of the Passion and even into the life of the Trinity—and thus beyond time because the Eternal Son is beyond time. The key to *semel* is that it is not just “once,” but “once *for all*.” “The true *semel* bears within itself the *semper*. What is perpetual takes place in what happened only once.”<sup>85</sup> “The *semel* wants to attain its *semper*. This Sacrifice is only complete when the world has become the place of love. Only then is worship perfected.”<sup>86</sup> In the example above, the historical Civil War event decided issues of slavery and states’ rights “once and for all.”

B.4. Replacement and Representation. Worship outside of Christianity must be content with replacement worship.<sup>87</sup> Non-Christians do not claim that God became human in Jesus. Through him in the Eucharist, Catholics experience the fullness of “representation” sacrifice. In “representation” one thing is mysteriously present in another thing.<sup>88</sup> This is foreshadowed in the exodus sacrifice where a first-born lamb is slain. The lamb represents all of the first-born

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>87</sup> To some extent Judaism and Islam share in representation worship. However, the majority of Jews and Muslims now engage only in word-based worship, not sacrifice. Thus, only Catholicism maintains worship of Word and sacrifice, and thus representation worship.

<sup>88</sup> Benedict, *Jesus of Nazareth. Part Two, Holy Week*, 38.

Hebrews, which in turn represents the whole Jewish people. In the offertory at Mass, the congregation prays, “May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy church.”<sup>89</sup> In the Mass there is a dynamic interplay between the Eucharistic bread, Christ, and the worshipping Church—one is mystically present in the other. One can correctly say, “The Body of Christ (Jesus) gives the Body of Christ (Eucharist) to the Body of Christ (Church), so that the Body of Christ (Church) becomes more like the Body of Christ (Jesus).” That is, Christ helps the faithful by giving them himself. The priest prays at Mass, “Look with favor on these offerings (plural)...we pray that your angel may take this sacrifice (singular) to your altar in heaven” (parentheses mine). All gifts pass through Christ, as a road, between us and the Father. “Through him (Jesus) we ask You (Father) to accept and bless these gifts (bread, wine, and ourselves) we offer...Through him (Jesus) You (Father) give us all these gifts.”<sup>90</sup> The Eucharist is representation worship; at the Eucharistic liturgy the faithful ask God to make “one thing mysteriously present in the other.” And this is precisely what God wants to do. The mixing of water with wine expresses, the faithful wish to “share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity.”<sup>91</sup> The faithful offer themselves to the Father through Christ. Human language trembles under the weight of the Divine Word; only with his grace can human speech bear him. In all of this the Divine Word breaks into human speech; his life enters into the lives of Christians; Christians’ offerings mingle with Christ’s perfect offering of himself.

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<sup>89</sup> *The Roman Missal*, 2011, Eucharistic Prayer I.

<sup>90</sup> All parentheses mine.

<sup>91</sup> *The Roman Missal*, 2011.

### **C. The Third Stage: The Desire of the Eternal to Take Hold of the Worshipper's Life, and Ultimately All Historical Reality.**<sup>92</sup>

C.1. Final Goal of Liturgy, Type. Both God and the individual Christian desire the eternal to take hold of the present and all of history. Is this finally the climax of worship? In the third stage, “Yes,” God and Christians desire that God fully take hold of humanity and the whole world. Humanity longs for the total and lasting Yes to God—the full *reditus*. Yet the pain of sin and our feeling of boredom and distraction at Mass are reminders that the Kingdom is not yet fully realized. Instead, humanity still lives in the middle phase of salvation history. As the patristic Fathers said, life in the Church is the time of “image” and looks ahead to the final “type” of heaven. In the final phase humanity will truly experience God as all in all (1 Cor 15:28). Liturgy always involves a sense of longing and hope; in some sense, the hope Christians experience now is a foretaste of the final heavenly banquet of the Lamb.

In the liturgy, the eternal breaks into the worshippers’ present moment. For Benedict the liturgy is the means by which earthly time is inserted into the time of Jesus Christ and into the right-here-right-now moment of the liturgy. I will explicate Benedict’s meaning by inserting some of his key terms into his one of his pregnant statements: “It (liturgy) is the turning point (*reditus*) in the process of redemption. The Shepherd (Christ) takes the lost sheep (us) onto his shoulders and carries it home”<sup>93</sup> to the Trinity. The Trinity’s *semper* love reconciles wounded humanity for all of eternity through the *semel* Christ-event. The Cross, which happened only once, is liturgically celebrated in the rhythmic cycle of daily, weekly, and yearly sacramental

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<sup>92</sup> Benedict, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 27. When Benedict says “historical” in this instance, he implies both creation *and* human history since historical revelation always involves and fulfills natural creation. Creation and history are brought forward and fulfilled in worship: “Creation, history, and worship are in a relationship of reciprocity.”

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

rituals. This can seem like a paradox. Yet this is proper and good because Christ acted “once for all”—for all people and for all times. “The Sacrifice is only complete when the world has become the place of love... Only then is worship perfected and what happened on Golgotha completed.”<sup>94</sup> His command “Do this in memory of me” is both specific and all-encompassing. Christ asks his followers to imitate his celebration of the Eucharistic liturgy, to imitate his self-offering, his loving actions, and his carrying of the cross. Christians can imitate Christ only “through him, and with him, and in him, O God, in the unity of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>95</sup> The faithful imitate Christ in the Holy Spirit—in the Church with their minds, bodies, and spirits. Christians celebrate Eucharist in daily, weekly, and yearly cycles because they want Jesus to fully penetrate their days, weeks, and years—and those of the whole world.

A few verses in Paul’s letter to the Romans may further illustrate. In chapters 1-11, Paul interprets the Jewish Scriptures and incorporates elements of Greek philosophy to understand the universal salvation that is offered by God in Christ. He concludes with a poetic doxology. “Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!... Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?” (Rom 11:33-36); Paul thus ends his theological treatise with a celebration of God’s goodness. The proper response, Paul’s response, to God’s gift of salvation is praise. Paul then gives his Roman audience more specific exhortations to praise: “In view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies (plural) as a living sacrifice (singular), holy and pleasing to God” (12:1). With St. Paul, Christians want our bodies—that is, our embodied selves—to become a living sacrifice, united to the sacrifice of Christ. Critics may contend, “You say you are the Body of Christ, but you don’t act like it.” This criticism has merit. There is a reason why Paul

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>95</sup> *The Roman Missal*, 2011.

was so demanding of the members of the churches he founded. Many claimed to be the Body of Christ, but their actions spoke otherwise.

For Benedict the proper response to the above criticism is not to discontinue the Eucharistic sacrifice, but to celebrate it in spirit and in truth. “Believe what you receive, teach what you believe, practice what you teach.”<sup>96</sup> In fact, this is the whole goal of the Eucharist—Christians want to become what they receive, to act in accord with who they are: the Body of Christ. At Mass the priest exhorts the faithful, “Pray, brothers and sisters, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.”<sup>97</sup> At Mass the congregation’s many sacrifices become united with the one sacrifice of Christ. He is *the* sacrifice because he died “once and for all.” The Church’s sacrifice is the Crucified and Risen Son, and the faithful unite themselves to his one sacrifice. The pain of sin and vice, particularly among Christians, is a stinging reminder that all still live in an in-between time: a time of image, symbols, and sacraments. God’s will is not yet “done on earth as it is in heaven.” Christians may yearn to go back in time to the historical Jesus, to have met him bodily. The Pharisees and Pilate met Jesus but they did not recognize him in “spirit and truth.” Even the disciples frequently misunderstood his words and deeds. After the Transfiguration Peter wished to erect three tents and remain there with Jesus. Mary Magdalen clung to the risen Body of Jesus. Jesus resisted both of these human efforts to abide with him; these disciples, like us, still lived in the second phase of “image.”

C.2. Dangers in Worship. Two liturgical approaches are dangerous. The first is the belief that the Church is not an image but is already the type or reality of heaven. Entry into the Church and the sacraments is identical with full communion with God. Benedict critiques the

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<sup>96</sup> Modified Ordination Rite for deacons, which states, “Believe what you read.”

<sup>97</sup> *The Roman Missal*, 2011.



Renaissance popes for this “gate of heaven” fallacy, but Catholics can still fall into this trap today. It often lies alongside a certain ecclesial arrogance that can turn the Bride of Christ into “a monster of terrible deformity and ferocity.”<sup>98</sup> The second danger is the belief that the human spirit has now progressed to the point that people can attain heaven on earth through their own devices. This is particularly tempting in developed and technologically advanced parts of the world. With this mindset, things like penance, the sacraments, and other rituals are regarded like training wheels once useful. But such relics are now foolish or even dangerous in a brave new world. Marxism and capitalism are two paths up the same false peak, believing that the third phase, “reality,” can be attained on earth now. “Faith in Christ’s return is, therefore, in the first place, the rejection of an intra-historical perfectibility of the world...we must add that faith in Christ’s return is also the certitude that the world will, indeed, come to its perfection, not through rational planning, but through that indestructible love which triumphed in the risen Christ.”<sup>99</sup>

C.3 Martyrs, Living Eucharist. In liturgy Christians worship *spe salvi*, in hope for salvation, the salvation in Christ Jesus. The saints experienced liturgy most fully because they were most open to the Transfiguration that Christ offers in liturgy. Their whole existence was devoted to a radical openness to Christ’s grace—through prayer, study, labor, penance, obedience, charity, and service. The Eucharist is the capstone which brings together all of these other elements. Instead of an isolated hour on Sunday, the Eucharist solemnizes their perpetual offering and receptiveness in Christ. In this way the martyrs are the living liturgy *crème de la crème*. Their *semel* offering mirrors Christ’s *semel* offering on the cross; thus, martyrs dramatically step into the *semper* state of the Eternal Son’s offering: “his self-giving is meant to

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<sup>98</sup> Benedict. *Introduction to Christianity*, 340.

<sup>99</sup> Benedict XVI. *Eschatology: Death and Eternal Life*, (ed. Aidan Nichols; trans. Michael Waldstein; Washington: Catholic University of America, 1988), 213.

become mine, so that I become contemporary with the Pasch of Christ and assimilated unto God. That is why in the early Church martyrdom was regarded as the real Eucharistic celebration, the most extreme actualization of the Christian's being a contemporary with Christ, of being united with him."<sup>100</sup> Christ so broke into their lives that they imitated him even in his passion and death, as true *Persona Christi*.

Paul used liturgical and Christological language to describe his own life and impending martyrdom. After the great hymn of Phil 2:6-11, Paul continued, "But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. So you too should be glad and rejoice with me" (Phil 2:17-18). The Son "emptied himself, taking the form of a slave" (2:7). Paul was likewise prepared to be broken and poured out in martyrdom—to continue his self-offering to God for humanity after the likeness of Jesus (2 Cor 4:10-11). Speaking of Paul's liturgical imagery, Benedict writes, "What happens in this is a becoming one with the self-giving of Jesus Christ, with his great act of love, which is as such the true worship of God... We are asking that we ourselves might become Eucharist with Christ and, thus, become acceptable and pleasing to God."<sup>101</sup> In Paul's looming martyrdom, he hoped to enter the Son's *semel* offering.

What is true for Jesus is true for Paul and is true for the post-biblical martyrs. In the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*, Polycarp is described as going to his death with complete peace and confidence. The *Martyrdom* describes him as being glorified and taken into the Kingdom of God before the eyes of the Christian audience. As the Romans set the pyre ablaze, it seemed that "the fire, shaping itself into the form of an arch, like the sail of a ship when filled with the wind,

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<sup>100</sup> Benedict. *The Spirit of Liturgy*, 58.

<sup>101</sup> Benedict XVI, *Pilgrim Fellowship of Faith: The Church as Communion* (ed. Stephan Otto Horn and Vinzenz Pfnür, trans. Henry Taylor; San Francisco: Ignatius, 2005), 112, 116.

encompassed as by a circle the body of the martyr.”<sup>102</sup> After he was burned to death, the Christians “took up his bones, as being more precious than the most exquisite jewels, and more purified than gold, and deposited them in a fitting place, whither, being gathered together, as opportunity is allowed us, with *joy* and rejoicing, the Lord shall grant us to celebrate the anniversary of his martyrdom.”<sup>103</sup> The Church gathers at the tombs of martyrs in worship, proclaiming Christ’s death sacramentalized in the martyr. In their bodies the martyrs pull together the three Scriptural forms of worship: liturgical, prophetic, and obedient suffering. Their lives and deaths are a kind of embodied homily. What they say and what they do become one, and thus become united with Christ’s everlasting sacrifice. Martyrs are a witness in the fullest sense. In life Polycarp first shared in the peace and joy of the kingdom; in his death he was transported fully into the new creation of heaven. Following his death, Polycarp imaged Christ as a source of joy and unity for the Church, which gathered around his body with joy and praise.

#### **D. Conclusion.**

The Mass will be boring, even meaningless, if one does not believe any of this. Hearing lies and telling lies is boring, too. Lies are meaningless—an escape from the effects of reality. This boredom can come from our disbelief, or from lukewarm belief. If I offer my gifts in a lazy, half-hearted way, then I am not invested in the sacramental representation. Some liturgists address this problem by trying to make the liturgy more exciting and relevant—via unusual music, overly dramatic presiding, and the like. They implicitly acknowledge that the lazy teenager is right—the content of liturgy is boring. For Benedict, life with the Trinity through the Incarnation, Passion, and Resurrection of Christ is not boring. This is the message of *The Spirit*

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<sup>102</sup> *Martyrdom of Polycarp*, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 1. (ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe; trans. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson; Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature, 1885.), #15.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 18, italics mine.

*of the Liturgy*: the Christian mysteries must be communicated, lived, and celebrated in liturgy, not papered over with cheap thrills. Christians need not bury their heads in their hands, for they have also felt how “the Church raises men up, gives them a home and a hope, a home that is hope—the path to eternal life.”<sup>104</sup> Faithful families and holy religious communities can be similar sacraments of hope and healing. In their humble love, they can be a foretaste of heaven where outsiders catch a taste of what a faithful, loving community can be.

Good liturgy cuts through this selfishness and boredom, and sweeps the faithful into Christ’s offering. Grand events such as ordinations and major feasts celebrated at cathedrals are prime examples of this divine in breaking. Authentic Christian liturgy is both a foretaste of heaven and an anticipation of our full communion with God. “It lays hold in advance of a more perfect life and, in so doing, gives our present life its proper measure.”<sup>105</sup> Like Peter after the Transfiguration, the Church cries out, “Lord, it is good for us to be here” (Matt 17:4). Good liturgy, beautiful Church art, music, and architecture should sweep the faithful into heaven, giving them a taste of the Kingdom. Encounters with the saints have a similar effect. In the Synoptic Gospels, the Transfiguration is a foretaste of the Resurrection which strengthens the disciples to undergo Jesus’ Passion and death. Only ignorance and arrogance turn the Bride into a monster. With humility, trust, and faith, the Christian liturgy remains Christ’s eternal Bride. Those who try to live without liturgy either have no hope or misplaced their hope. The Eucharist is the source and summit of worship. In receiving Eucharist worthily, Christians are received into Christ’s *reditus*. Christian liturgical worship is a taste of the eternal and food for the journey; receiving Eucharistic communion means entering Christ’s *reditus* and thus being in communion

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<sup>104</sup> Benedict, *Introduction to Christianity*, 344.

<sup>105</sup> Benedict, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 21.

with the Trinity. Those who seek to live their lives within the liturgy have placed their hope in *spe salvi*, Christ our hope. He is our path to *reditus*. In him we shall never hope in vain.

### Chapter 3: The Liturgy and the *Spiritual Exercises*

Recall from Chapter 1 the thesis of this paper: the central movement of Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises* is the retreatant's entry into Christ's *reditus* within a Eucharistic context. I will show how this Eucharistic *reditus* movement is present throughout the Four Weeks of the *Exercises*. One sees this in the many explicit references to the sacraments, liturgies, and to the Eucharist in the *Exercises*. One also sees this movement in the *Exercises* through its implicit Eucharistic context and dynamism. In what follows, I will suggest parallels between each of the Four Weeks and the four main parts of the Mass. I will then show how the *reditus* movement is especially important in understanding two key meditations in the *Exercises*, the Call of the King and the *Contemplatio*. I will carefully analyze these two meditations, both textually and thematically, and show how they are similar to the text and movement of the Mass. In considering these different aspects, the reader will see how the central movement of the *Exercises* is precisely the retreatant's entry into Christ's *reditus* within a Eucharistic context.

To be sure, the *Exercises* is a spiritual retreat manual, not a work of systematic theology. Pope Benedict XVI's work discussed in the previous two chapters—in which he systematically outlines the *exitus-reditus* movement in *The Spirit of the Liturgy*—can assist in our analysis of the *Exercises*. Recall that Benedict shows how this dynamic movement applies to the immanent Trinity, the economic Trinity, and in the Church's Eucharistic liturgy. His work will be used as the main systematic resource for understanding the central movement of the *Exercises* and in setting forth the central hypothesis of this paper. While Benedict outlines *exitus-reditus* in *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, I will draw from several of his other works to expand and explain this movement as it pertains to his Christology and Eucharistic theology.

## A. Preliminary Issues

A.1. Translations of the *Exercises* and of the Mass. Contemporary scholars and translators use three main versions of the *Spiritual Exercises*; all three originated within the lifetime of Ignatius. The *Autograph* was written in Spanish.<sup>106</sup> The *Versio Prima* and the *Vulgata* were both written in Latin. Ignatius's original Spanish manuscript has unfortunately been lost. What is at present called the *Autograph* is a copy made by a secretary that contains corrections made by Ignatius himself, in Ignatius's own handwriting. Two Latin translations were made during the lifetime of Ignatius. The first Latin translation is the *Versio Prima* (*P1*). This is a literal Latin translation from the Spanish *Autograph*, probably made by Ignatius himself around the year 1534—though his handwritten text is no longer extant. The *Versio Prima* was copied by a fellow Jesuit in 1541. It was then copied again by another Jesuit in 1547, with a few minor additions; this later copied version is now called *P2*. Since *P2* is so similar to *P1*, contemporary scholars treat them together.

The second Latin version is the Vulgate Version or *Vulgata*, which was produced between 1542-47. This is a translation of the *Autograph* into classical Latin. It is more elegant and more in accordance with the style of the period. Both *P2* and the *Vulgata* were presented to Pope Paul III for formal approval. The pope approved both texts in 1548. Ignatius himself used the *Vulgata* from 1548-56. The *Vulgata* was the most widely published and circulated version of the *Exercises* until Jans Roothaan, the 29<sup>th</sup> Jesuit Superior General, translated and printed a new Latin version of the *Autograph* in 1835.

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<sup>106</sup> For information about early versions of *Exercises*, see Ganss's introduction in Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius: A Translation and Commentary* (trans. and ed. George E. Ganss. St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1992), 8-10.

In this chapter I will use the *P1*, *P2*, and the *Vulgata* translations of the Exercises.<sup>107</sup> I do this in order to compare the textual and thematic similarities to the Latin translation of the Mass. I will use Elder Mullan's translation as the main English text for the Exercises.<sup>108</sup> Mullan's is a close translation of the Spanish *Autograph*; his English phrasing will be familiar to contemporary scholars and those retreatants who have made the Exercises.

When comparing the text of the Exercises to the text of the Church's liturgy, I will use the Tridentine translation of the Mass as an important 16<sup>th</sup> century source. This text was approved by Pope Pius V in 1570 and immediately became the norm for the Church's liturgy, especially in Western Europe. While this date of 1570 occurred after Ignatius's death, I will presume that the Tridentine Mass simply formalized and standardized the liturgy as it was already celebrated throughout most of Western Europe. A complete examination and explanation of this hypothesis would require a separate thesis. I will simply rely on a hermeneutic of continuity within the Church's liturgical tradition. Today, the 1962 *Missale Romanum* is the most familiar resource for the Tridentine Latin Mass, so I will use this official Church resource for my analysis.

I will also utilize the 1970 *Novus Ordo* Latin Mass text,<sup>109</sup> and the new 2011 ICEL English Mass translation. I will specify which text I am using in each instance. Again, I presume that there is strong continuity in the Church's liturgy through the centuries—from Trent through Vatican II to the 2011 translation. For example, in the year 2011 each of these three texts (the Tridentine Mass conveyed in the 1962 Missal, the 1970 *Novus Ordo* Latin Mass, and the 2011

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<sup>107</sup> Footnotes will specify which version is being referenced. All three Latin translations of the Exercises can be found in *Sancti Ignatii De Loyola Exercitia Spiritualia: Textuum Antiquissimorum Nova Editio* (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1969).

<sup>108</sup> Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius* (trans. and ed. Elder Mullan, New York: P. J. Kennedy & sons, 1914).

<sup>109</sup> This text is printed in Appendix IV of the 1985 ICEL *Sacramentary*.



English Missal) may be validly used in a celebration of the Mass in the Roman rite. Again, a full and complete treatment of liturgical continuity and/or rupture would require a separate thesis.

A.2. Ignatius's Eucharistic Emphasis and Devotion. The Eucharist played a central role in Ignatius's own conversion. As he was slowly growing in his practice of the Christian faith, he was blessed with a Eucharistic vision at Manresa. In his *Autobiography* Ignatius describes this vision thus: "The way in which God had created the world was represented in his understanding...he was seeing a white thing, from which some rays were coming out, and that God was making light out of it." He continues, "Similarly, while being in that town in the church of the said monastery, and hearing Mass one day, as the body of the Lord was being raised, he saw with his interior eyes some things like white rays which were coming from above...what he saw clearly with his understanding was to see how Jesus Christ Our Lord was present in that most holy sacrament."<sup>110</sup> One sees that this mystical vision is explicitly Eucharistic in character. Ignatius experiences the vision during the elevation at Mass, and the vision helps him to believe in the Real Presence in the Eucharist.

After Ignatius was blessed with a Eucharistic vision, he later turned this fervor outward by publicly championing frequent reception of Communion by retreatants, both Jesuits and lay. In a letter to the townspeople of Azpieta in 1540, he encourages the faithful to go to confession and to receive Communion at least monthly; if a person "wish[ed] to go oftener than this, there is no doubt that he would be acting in conformity with the wish of our Creator and Lord" and would make "considerable spiritual progress."<sup>111</sup> Later in the letter, he cites St. Augustine as a

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<sup>110</sup> *Autobiography*, in *Saint Ignatius of Loyola: Personal Writings; Reminiscences, Spiritual Diary, Select Letters Including the Text of the Spiritual Exercises* (trans. and ed. Joseph A. Munitiz, and Philip Endean; London: Penguin Books, 1996), #29. As in the *Exercises*, the citation "#29" refers to the paragraph number in the *Autobiography*. Emphases in this paragraph mine; I am trying to show textual and thematic similarities in these two Ignatian texts.

<sup>111</sup> Letter #26, in Ignatius, *Letters of St Ignatius Loyola* (ed. and trans. by William Young; Chicago: Loyola University, 1959), 42-45.

proponent of weekly and even daily Communion.<sup>112</sup> Ignatius was at times criticized by Church leaders for his views. Given Ignatius's devotion to the Eucharist and his efforts to spread Eucharistic devotion, it seems plausible that the Eucharist would also play a prominent role in the *Exercises*.

One sees more Eucharistic connections in Ignatius's other spiritual writings. A Jesuit takes vows during Mass. After the Eucharistic prayer, the Jesuit kneels before his superior while the superior holds the consecrated Host and Chalice.<sup>113</sup> In the *Constitutions*, Ignatius directs that the man receive the Eucharist immediately after making vows. Portions of the vow formula are quite similar to the prayers that the priest recites during the offering of the chalice in the Tridentine Mass. In the Mass the priest offers the chalice, saying:

*Offerimus* tibi, Domine, **calicem salutaris**, tuam deprecantes clementiam:  
ut in **conspectu divinae majestatis tuae** pro nostra,  
et totius mundi salute cum ODORE SUAVITATIS ASCENDAT.

We *offer* you, Lord, the **saving chalice**, beseeching your clemency:  
in order that it may RISE in the **sight of your divine majesty**,  
in an ODOR OF SWEETNESS, for our salvation and that of the whole world.<sup>114</sup>

In the vows, the Jesuit kneels before the host and chalice and offers himself, saying:

Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, Ego. N. licet undecunque  
**divino tuo conspectu** indignissimus... A tua ergo immensa bonitate et clementia  
per **Jesu Christi sanguinem** peto SUPPLICITER ut hoc holocaustum in  
ODOREM SUAVITATIS ADMITTERE digneris  
et, ut largitus es ad hoc desiderandum et *offerendum*...

Almighty and Eternal God, I N., though altogether  
most unworthy in **your divine sight**...I suppliantly beg your immense goodness and clemency,  
through the Blood of Jesus Christ to deign to RECEIVE this holocaust in  
an ODOR OF SWEETNESS,  
and that just as you gave me the grace to desire and *offer* this...<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> Contemporary scholars attribute this quote to the medieval bishop Alcuin (735-804), not Augustine. The point remains that Ignatius believed Augustine to be a proponent of frequent communion, and cited him to support his own position. *Ibid.*, 45 (see footnote).

<sup>113</sup> Before Ignatius religious orders pronounced vows before a superior or a bishop, not before the Eucharist.

<sup>114</sup> Latin from 1962 *Missal*. English translation by Aaron Pidel, SJ. Fonts altered to highlight similarities.

In essence, through his vows the Jesuit offers himself to God through the Blood of Christ is similar to the way the priest offers the Chalice to God for the salvation of the world at Mass. The Jesuit asks to be a kind of living chalice containing the Blood of Christ. In both cases, the offering is made “in the divine sight” of God and the supplicant asks that God receive this offering “in an odor of sweetness.” A more complete comparison could be made here, but suffice it to say that there are textual and thematic similarities between Ignatius’s text of the Jesuit vows and an important prayer from the Mass.

It should also be pointed out that Ignatius chose the explicitly Christocentric name “Society of Jesus” for his new religious order. He insisted on this name, despite heated opposition from Church authorities and some of his own followers. In this name and in the above examples, one sees that Ignatius used Christ-centered, Eucharistic language in crafting key documents, events, and titles. Therefore, it seems likely that the *Exercises* would be similarly Christ-centered and Eucharistic in its language and movement.

A.3. Explicit References to Eucharist, Liturgy, and Sacraments in the *Exercises*. There are many explicit references to sacraments and the liturgy in the *Exercises*. Ignatius recommends that a person be secluded during the retreat so that he may “attend Mass and vespers daily.”<sup>116</sup> Ignatius divides the day according to liturgical practice, advising that retreatants make certain contemplations at the hour of Mass and again at the hour of Vespers.<sup>117</sup> Ignatius encourages retreatants making the entire 30-day retreat to be secluded so that they can “go each day to Mass

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<sup>115</sup> Latin from *Constitutiones Societatis Iesu 1558* (London: British Jesuits, 1838), #540. English *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and their Complementary Norms: A Complete English Translation of the Official Latin Texts* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996), #540. Fonts altered to highlight similarities.

<sup>116</sup> *Sp.Ex.*, Mullan, #20. In the *Spiritual Exercises*, “#20” refers to the paragraph number, not the page number. This is the standard reference system for scholarly work on the *Exercises*.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, #72, #128. The year-long retreat in daily life is for those with education and ability, and is discussed in #19. The full 30-day retreat is discussed in #20.

and vespers” for an entire month.<sup>118</sup> Ignatius encouraged retreatants to receive Communion frequently. He asked those making the abbreviated 18<sup>th</sup> annotation retreat to “receive the Blessed Sacrament every fifteen days, and better, if he be so moved, every eight.”<sup>119</sup> The 18<sup>th</sup> annotation retreat covers only the First Week, and is appropriate for retreatants with little education or ability. From this we may presume that those making the fuller versions of the retreat, either the year-long retreat or the full 30-day retreat, would receive Communion even more often than this.<sup>120</sup> The frequency with which the faithful received Communion varied widely in Europe the 1500s; yearly or monthly reception was most common.

Ignatius also asks the director and retreatant to be aware of the Church’s liturgical calendar of feast and fast days. For example, in the Fourth Week, the retreatant’s eating habits should be in “temperance and all moderation; except...[for] fasting or abstinence which the Church commands; because those are always to be fulfilled.”<sup>121</sup> In these examples we see Ignatius organizing the retreatant’s daily schedule according to the liturgical schedule of the Church. The retreatant attends daily Mass and vespers. For many retreatants, daily attendance at liturgy is a novel practice. One prays specific meditations before, during, or after these daily liturgies. One engages the rigors of fasts and feasts in the *Exercises*, but always within the larger Church calendar. The retreatant’s spiritual life is built within and around the liturgy.

The retreatant concludes the First Week by making a general confession and receiving Communion.<sup>122</sup> Confession prepares him to receive the Eucharist, which then “is an aid not only not to fall into sin, but also to preserve the increase of grace.”<sup>123</sup> There is an interplay here, with

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid., #20.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., #18.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., #229.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., #44.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

Eucharist as both “the source and the summit”<sup>124</sup> of the retreat. The arduous self-examination of the First Week leads one to confession and then Communion. In this way, the Eucharist is the summit, capping the graces of the First Week. Communion also safeguards one from future sin and seals one’s pious resolutions as an ongoing source for living out Christian life.

The *Anima Christi* prayer is a touchstone which is used in several contemplations in the *Exercises*.<sup>125</sup> While the preceding paragraphs of my analysis have dealt with Ignatius’s explicit references to sacraments and liturgies, we now begin a more subtle analysis of the Eucharistic imagery in the *Exercises*. The *Anima Christi* prayer is Christ-centered and deeply Eucharistic: “Soul of Christ, sanctify me. Body of Christ, save me. Blood of Christ, inebriate me.”<sup>126</sup> The opening lines of the prayer refer to three of the four aspects of Christ present in the Eucharist within a Thomistic framework of body, blood, soul, and divinity. The prayer leaves out (while presuming) the divinity of Christ; the prayer focuses the retreatant more specifically on Christ’s human physicality. In the language of the prayer, one is clothed and washed by Christ externally as well as renewed and purified internally: “soul of Christ, sanctify me...water from the side of Christ, wash me... within thy wounds, hide me.” The phrase “inebriate me” poetically gathers two images from the Mass: the alcohol in the altar wine and Christ’s blood. The retreatant asks Christ to uplift him and make him spiritually inebriated by receiving Communion.<sup>127</sup> More plainly, a person hears the words “Body of Christ” from the priest or minister before receiving

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<sup>124</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, 11.

<sup>125</sup> #63 and #147. In #148 Ignatius instructs the retreatant to repeat #147 four times.

<sup>126</sup> Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius: A Translation and Commentary*. (trans, George Ganss, St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1992). This was a favorite prayer of Ignatius, though he did not write it. The prayer dates from the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Exact authorship is unknown. In the preface to the *Exercises*, Ganss writes, “This prayer, the *Anima Christi*, was not in Ignatius’s text of the *Exercises*. However, because it is less widely known today than in the sixteenth century, most modern editions print it here.” Ganss places the prayer before #21. #1-20 is material chiefly for the director; #21 begins to explain the *Exercises* to the retreatant.

<sup>127</sup> In Ignatius’s time, the laity rarely received Communion under both species. In this sense, the physical, bodily, and Christological imagery is even clearer today than in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

Communion at Mass. The *Anima Christi* is prayed at the end of certain meditations; while it is not the focus of the meditation, it does provide a Eucharistic tone to the contemplations.

### **B. The *Exercises*' Movement: Reception and Offering Within Christ's *Reditus***

Benedict's discussion of the Trinitarian *exitus-reditus* movement aids in capturing the movement of the *Spiritual Exercises*. Recall that Benedict explains this movement as it pertains to the immanent Trinity, the economic Trinity, and the Eucharist. In the immanent Trinity, the Father begets the Son in an act of eternal self-giving. The Son continually and reciprocally gives himself in love to the Father. This is a dynamic, loving, living movement that exists beyond time. This is the eternal, non-historic *exitus* and *reditus*. Trinitarian love is neither a groveling submission nor a dissolving of the self into another. Rather, in begetting the Son the Father becomes fully himself; in giving himself back to the Father in love, the Son becomes fully himself.<sup>128</sup> The Father then creates the world and humanity through the Son. This is the *exitus* of creation. For Benedict, God's outpouring himself in creative love is the ground of all created being. Humanity finds life and love in communion with God insofar as humans imitate the Son's *reditus*, that is, the Son's giving himself back to the Father in love. The Son is from the Father and eternally returns (*reditus*) to the Father in love. Through the Incarnation, the Son pours himself out in love (*exitus*) to humanity for the salvation of the world, while at the same time responding to the Father with love and generosity (*reditus*). The Incarnate Son continues on earth the pattern that the eternally begotten Son has lived for all eternity.

Jesus continued the *reditus* pattern in the Last Supper and the Passion. His *reditus* self-offering continues to be at work in the Mass. At the Last Supper Jesus' total self-offering is

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<sup>128</sup> *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 33. Benedict refers here to creatures, and humans in particular. Thus, my use of the phrase "becomes fully" in regard to the Father and Son only approximates the divine nature, since God is perfect and does not become "more perfect."

liturgically sacramentalized. He continues to give himself to the Father for humanity, even to the point of death. He does this on our behalf as the Incarnate Son, Jesus. His command, “Do this in memory of me,” is a commission to enter his *reditus*. Recall Benedict’s three-stage theological schema. “The second stage is the entry of the eternal into our present moment in the liturgical action.”<sup>129</sup> In the Mass Christ allows humanity to complete the circle of reception and offering. He enters our liturgical moment in the Mass; by entering into his eternal *reditus* in the Eucharist, Christians enter into communion with the Trinity.

In the *Exercises* Ignatius’s understanding of the dynamism of a retreatant’s responding to God’s grace is similar to Benedict’s *exitus-reditus* paradigm. Reciprocally, the retreatant enters the Son’s eternal offering of himself through an action that is highly liturgical and Eucharistic. In the *Contemplatio* prayer in the Fourth Week, Ignatius leads the retreatant to enter Christ’s *reditus*. I will discuss the *Contemplatio* prayer in more detail below in Section D. In the *Contemplatio* the retreatant receives Christ’s *exitus* and then enters into Christ’s *reditus*. Notice the rhythmic, even cyclic language of reception and offering in the *Contemplatio* as the retreatant meditates on “how much God our Lord has done for me, and...what I ought on my side to offer.”<sup>130</sup> The primary pattern is from God to humanity, from God’s generosity to the retreatant’s generosity. The *Suscipe* prayer gathers the opening points of the *Contemplatio*; in a spirit of gratitude and generosity the retreatant prays to God “with much feeling.” The *Suscipe* thus links the retreatant’s generous offering with God’s generosity. He prays, “Take, Lord, and receive all

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<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 60. In the first stage, the eternal is embodied in what is once-for-all. The Trinitarian *exitus* and *reditus* is embodied in history. The second stage is the entry of the eternal into our present moment in the liturgical action.” In the Mass Christ allows humanity to complete the circle of reception and offering. He enters our liturgical moment in the Mass; by entering into his eternal *reditus* in the Eucharist, Christians enter into communion with the Trinity. The third stage is the desire of the eternal to take hold of the worshipper’s life, and ultimately all historical reality. While Christians fully experience this “taking hold” in heaven, they can have a foretaste of it in the liturgy and by living a holy life.

<sup>130</sup> *Sp.Ex.*, #234.

my liberty, my memory, my intellect, and all my will—all that I have and possess. Thou gavest it to me: to Thee, Lord, I return it! All is Thine, dispose of it according to Thy will. Give me Thy love and grace.”<sup>131</sup> One can offer gifts generously to God because one can rely on God’s continued generosity. On one level, the statement, “All is Thine,” is simply a statement of fact. God created everything, and everything belongs to him. But now the statement is layered with trust and hope. The retreatant acknowledges and accepts this fact with freedom and joy: All is Thine! The Son receives everything from the Father, including his personhood. This is the eternal, divine *exitus*. The Son freely and joyfully returns all to the Father, including himself. This is the *reditus*. In a similar way, God has given the retreatant all things, including his very self in Jesus Christ. The retreatant is to imitate the Son’s free reception and joyful generosity in the *Suscipe*. Recall that this exchange of gifts is not about giving things, but about giving oneself. The “Lord desires to give me Himself,” and the retreatant then gives God “everything that is mine, and myself with it.”<sup>132</sup> The gift of self which is offered in the *Contemplatio* is grounded in the Trinity’s personal *exitus-reditus*; this is not simply an exchange of gifts, but an eternal self-giving. The Father eternally begets the Son in love; the Son departs only to return in love. The retreatant is invited to imitate the Son’s *reditus*. Christians receive the Incarnate Son sacramentally in the Eucharist. In the *Contemplatio*, Ignatius used Eucharistic language and context to focus the retreatant’s reciprocal gift of himself to God.

While this pattern of self-gift reaches a climax in the *Contemplatio*, the pattern has been at work throughout the *Exercises*. For example, in the “First Principle and Foundation” exercise of the First Week, the retreatant considers the basic truth that, “Man is created to praise,

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.



reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save his soul.”<sup>133</sup> Later in the First Week, imagining the cross, the retreatant considers how Christ came to “die for my sins” and then “what I ought to do for Christ.”<sup>134</sup> In this early part of the retreat, the focus is on actions and gifts. Christ does something great for me, and I consider what I ought to “do” for him. Certainly these initial actions and gifts are an appropriate part of the *reditus*, yet they remain somewhat physical and objective. In the Second Week, Christ’s *exitus* becomes more personal and intimate. Christ, “who *for me* has become man, that I may more love and follow Him.”<sup>135</sup> Note how in the Second Week Ignatius shifts from the abstract language of the First Principle (“Man,” “himself”) to more intimate, personal language: for *me*, that *I* may love him more. Similarly, in the First Week Christ dies “for my sins” and becomes man “for me” in the Second Week: my sins, me; it is one level closer and more personal. In the Second Week Christ takes action for me, becoming man. On one level, this is an objective fact. God became man for me whether I like it or not, whether I accept him or not. Yet, the retreatant is invited to respond in a way that is reciprocal and personal, in loving and following Christ. In loving obedience, the Son makes an *exitus* from the immanent Trinity to become human. He does this to draw sinful humanity back into *reditus*, back into loving relationship with the Trinity. The Son knows, obeys, and loves the Father. Ignatius asks the retreatant to actively enter the *reditus* with knowledge, obedience, and love. The retreatant is invited to imitate Christ’s *reditus*, to do so through Christ’s *reditus*, and to do so in the context of the Eucharist.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid., #23.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., #53.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., #104.

<sup>136</sup> Know: “interior *knowledge* of the Lord.” Obedience: “*follow* Him,” in which Christ leads and the retreatant follows behind. Love: “that I may more *love* and follow Him.” Ibid., #104.

### **C. The Four Weeks of the *Exercises* Mirror the Dynamism of the Eucharistic Liturgy**

The Four Weeks of the Spiritual *Exercises* closely correlate to the four parts of the Mass. The First Week is similar to the Kyrie as one acknowledges one's sins and failings, yet also calls upon Christ for mercy and help. The Second Week is much like the Liturgy of the Word, as one is taught about the action of God in salvation history, culminating in the saving action of Christ in the Gospels. The Third Week focuses on the Last Supper and the Passion, and is thus similar to the Liturgy of the Eucharist. In the Fourth Week the retreatant prays with the resurrection stories and the *Contemplatio*. There are parallels here to the Communion Rite and the Rite of Dismissal. In what follows, I will explicate these connections more fully. In doing so, I will employ features from a Sunday Mass in Ordinary Time, which I consider to be a normative liturgical event.

Ignatius outlines the themes of the Four Weeks in the third and tenth annotations. "The First Week is devoted to the consideration and the contemplation of sins; the Second, to the life of Christ our Lord... the Third, to the Passion of Christ our Lord; and the Fourth, to the Resurrection and Ascension."<sup>137</sup> Later, he draws upon the three stages outlined in traditional Catholic spirituality: the purgative life corresponds to the First Week, the illuminative life corresponds to the Second Week.<sup>138</sup> One can infer that the "unitive life" corresponds with the Fourth Week. The Third Week is a time of illumination and/or unity.

Two sources guide the presentation of this section. The first is Kathleen Hughes, *Were not our Hearts Burning within Us? We are Sent*.<sup>139</sup> Her talk focused on the Four Weeks of the

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<sup>137</sup> *Sp.Ex.*, #3. In this section, all references to the *Exercises* are from Mullan's translation, unless otherwise noted.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, #10.

<sup>139</sup> Kathleen Hughes, *Were not our Hearts Burning within Us: We are Sent* (talk given at Ignatian Spirituality Conference, St. Louis University, 2010).

Exercises and the four parts of the Mass. This talk organized and crystalized my own scattered hunches and inklings on this topic. The second source is Vincent Hovley's article "A Rock to Build On."<sup>140</sup> While Hughes focuses on the Four Weeks and the Mass, Hovley draws broader parallels between the Eucharist, Christian life, the *Exercises*, and the writings of Bernard Lonergan.

Finally, to justify this comparison and connection between the *Exercises* and the parts of the Mass, I point to several devotions within the tradition of the Church. In a sense the Mass is a summary and climax of the whole of Christian life. Conversely, one can focus on a particular part of the Mass for personal and communal devotions, so as to enter more deeply into it. The practice of examination of conscience and confession is an ancient tradition; this is a way to slowly reflect on the *Confiteor* and absolution in the opening rites of the Mass. The Benedictine practice of *lectio divina* is a way to reflect on the Scriptures, especially the readings at Mass, for personal spiritual nourishment. The Stations of the Cross are a venerable way of entering into the Passion of Christ, while Eucharistic adoration is a way to savor Christ's presence in the consecrated Host. In crafting the *Exercises*, Ignatius was rooted in the Church's traditions while imparting his own unique contribution in this spiritual work.

C.1. First Week and the Introductory Rites of the Mass. In the history of the Eucharist one sees a connection between the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the *Kyrie* at Mass. The communal action of acknowledging sins led to public acts of penance for more grievous sins. Later this led to the practice of individual confession and absolution. Over time, the Church asked that mortal sins be confessed and forgiven in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, while venial sins could be removed through the Eucharist. There is a close and mysterious connection

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<sup>140</sup> Vincent Hovley, "A Rock to Build On," *Review for Religious*, 53, (1994), 774-8.

between the two sacraments. Forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God is the whole point of Eucharist. At Mass Christians acknowledge that they are sinners and separate from God. They gather at Mass to be reconciled to God and to receive the Body of Christ.

In the First Week Ignatius offers a probing, multifaceted, and relentless process “to overcome oneself, and to order one’s life.”<sup>141</sup> In effect, this is a long, personal penitential act with a *Kyrie*. The priest prays, “Brethren, let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.” In the Mass a brief pause for silence follows. The silence of the First Week is an expansion of this brief pause in the Mass. The *Exercises* provide several meditations “to purify oneself, and to make a better confession.”<sup>142</sup> In #33-42, the retreatant considers his thoughts, words, and actions.<sup>143</sup> This exactly follows the form of the *Confiteor* at Mass: “I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, and in what I have done.” The *Confiteor* continues, “through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault.” There is a repetition and communal mourning in this statement. The congregation does not just acknowledge sin, but maturely owns it and expresses real sorrow. Ignatius personalizes this communal act for the retreatant. The First Week draws upon a wealth of biblical and cultural imagery to help the retreatant feel the full darkness of sin. One imagines one’s soul imprisoned, a whole court-record of one’s sins, the fires of hell, the shrieking of the damned, and sees oneself as “a sore and abscess” dripping with the poison of sin.<sup>144</sup> The goal is not simply an emotional response but “to perceive the disorder in my actions, in order to detest them, amend myself, and put myself in order.”<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> *Sp.Ex.*, Mullan, #21.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, see #32-42.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, thoughts: #33-37; words: #38-41; actions: #42.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, #47-58.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, #63.

The goal of purgation is not just sorrow but also reconciliation and hope. Against the backdrop of sin and sorrow, at Mass the people turn to the heavenly hosts for intercession and help. In the penitential act, one asks “the Blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints... to pray for me to the Lord our God.” Ignatius has the retreatant meditate with wonder how the Angels “guarded me, and prayed for me; the Saints, how they have been engaged in interceding and praying for me.”<sup>146</sup> Mary likewise plays an important role as the subject of an early colloquy, with the retreatant asking her to “get me grace from Her Son.”<sup>147</sup> Both the Mass and the *Exercises* end this penitential act by turning to Christ in humility and trust. The priest gives absolution<sup>148</sup> saying, “May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. Lord have mercy...” After a vivid meditation on personal sins, Ignatius moves the retreatant to a “Colloquy of mercy, pondering and giving thanks to God our Lord that He has given me life up to now.”<sup>149</sup>

At Mass the *Gloria* is then sung. The *Gloria* both takes up the themes already expressed, as well as points the congregation ahead. “Heavenly King...Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.” The themes of “sin and mercy” have been expressed in the Penitential Rite; the image of the Lamb will be evoked again before Communion. This is the first reference to the King, which will be heard again in the “kingdom” of the Lord’s Prayer. The *Gloria* is a prayer of glory and majesty at the end of the opening rite, sung with the angels and encompassing the whole world.

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<sup>146</sup> Ibid., #60.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., #63.

<sup>148</sup> This action is related to but distinct from the absolution granted in reconciliation.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., #61. Ignatius then leads the retreatant to a meditation on hell; this is a repetition with variation to deepen the experience. As noted above, I am not trying to show an exact correlation between the Mass and the Exercises, but rather that Ignatius has modeled the *Exercises* upon the shape and spirit of the liturgy.

Benedict states that the Mass “is the entry of the eternal into our present moment in the liturgical action.”<sup>150</sup> God breaks into human history and invites the faithful to participate in the divine life. The faithful begin to experience this divine entry and invitation in the *Gloria*. They join the angels’ song from Luke’s gospel, “Glory to God in the highest” (2:14). Neither the priest nor the people address God directly until the *Kyrie*; there, the plea is still one of repentance. In the *Gloria* the congregation praises God directly: “We praise you, we bless you, we adore you.” They begin to experience and praise God’s glorious entry into the present liturgical action.

The collect finishes the opening rites and leads the faithful from a state of purgation to one of illumination. On the 31<sup>st</sup> Sunday, the prayer is:

Almighty and every-living God,  
Increase our faith, hope and charity,  
And make us love what you command, so that we may merit what you promise.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
One God, forever and ever.

The plea to “increase our faith, hope, and charity” is positive, while implicitly acknowledging that we lack faith and charity. The “promise” has been proclaimed in God’s glory and mercy. Christ’s reign refers back to his kingship; it also points forward to the divine actions that will be described in the readings.

The “Call of the King” meditation concludes the First Week of the *Exercises*.<sup>151</sup> It has two main parts. In the first part the retreatant beholds the glory of an earthly and then an eternal

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<sup>150</sup> *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 60.

<sup>151</sup> There is much debate among scholars as to whether the Call of the King belongs in the First or Second Weeks. The *Vulgata* and *Versio Prima* both put it at the beginning of the Second Week, asking the retreatant to make the exercise twice in the same day in #99. Then, in #101, the text states that first contemplation of the first day of the Second Week is devoted to the Incarnation meditation. If the first contemplation of the Second Week is the Incarnation, then the Call of the King must be in the First Week. If the reader is still not convinced, then let him grant that the order of the Mass and the order of the *Exercises* is the same:

king. In the second part the retreatant offers his labor to Christ the King. The first part is similar to the *Gloria*; the second part is similar to the Mass's opening collect. After beholding the glory of the two kings, Christ the King now calls the retreatant—a redeemed sinner—into his divine service. The difficult interior work of the First Week now gives way to an outward-directed focus on the eternal King. This meditation is a glimpse of Christ's power and majesty and of his all-encompassing mission. The *Gloria* praises the "Lord God, heavenly King," while in the *Exercises* the retreatant beholds the "King eternal and universal Lord" whose plan is to "conquer all the world."<sup>152</sup> As in the *Gloria*, there is a foreshadowing here of things to come: "following me in the pain he or she may follow me in the *glory*."<sup>153</sup> This pain refers to Christ's passion, while the glory refers to his resurrection. The retreatant's prayer will grow in depth and texture as the retreat continues.

Like the collect, this offering in the second part of "The Call of the King" meditation gathers the major symbols of the First Week and brings them forward. "Eternal Lord of all things, I make my offering with your favor and help...in the presence of your infinite Goodness, and of your glorious Mother, and of all the holy men and women in your heavenly court."<sup>154</sup> The scene is familiar, but the context is different. Instead of begging these intercessors to pull the retreatant out of sin, he now stands before them to offer himself to Christ; he will rely on their continued "favor and help." In the First Week Ignatius has crafted a series of meditations that are

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Mass: examination and confession, absolution, praising the glory of the Heavenly King, prayer, Scripture readings centered on a chronological reading of the gospels, with personal application in homily

*Exercises*: examination and confession, absolution, beholding the glory of the Eternal King, prayer, chronological reading the life of Christ in the scriptures, with personal application

In this paper, I am arguing that the function of the offering in #98 in the Call of the King is similar to the collect; both are hinges between parts. Both the Mass and the *Exercises* contain elements of foreshadowing and fulfillment—which is in fact analogous to the structure of the Scriptures. Further, both the Mass and the *Exercises* occur as a continuous flow; one part leads to another. Participants experience smooth, logical transitions—not abrupt starts and stops.

<sup>152</sup> *Sp.Ex.*, Mullan, #97, 95.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, #95.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, #98.

similar to the introductory rites of the Mass. The *Exercises* give the retreatant time and tools to personalize and deepen these important spiritual movements.

C.2. The Second Week and the Liturgy of the Word. In the Second Week the retreatant asks for the grace of the “knowledge of Our Lord, who became human for me, that I may love him more intensely and follow him more closely.”<sup>155</sup> Ignatius gives a brief overview of salvation history, with the Divine Persons gazing upon their creation, seeing “all the peoples in such great blindness...and going down to hell,” and carrying out their redemption through the Incarnation.<sup>156</sup> This is a very short summary of the fall up to the Annunciation. Ignatius then outlines the main events in the life of Christ. In the supplementary material in #262-312, he outlines specific Gospel passages for the retreatant to read and contemplate. He uses portions of the four Gospels—especially Matthew and Luke—as well as Acts and First Corinthians. Adding up the chapters and verses listed in #262-312, I estimate that it contains about 25 chapters—or roughly the length of Luke’s Gospel. Recall that the retreatant is encouraged to attend daily Mass and Vespers. Thus he or she would also hear a significant amount of Scripture in these liturgies. During a 30-day retreat, based on the Church’s current cycle of readings, the retreatant would hear about 5 chapters of Old Testament texts, dozens of Psalms, 2-3 chapters of Pauline letters, and 6-8 chapters of gospel material. The Second Week, like the readings at Mass, is organized according to a chronological reading of the life of Christ in the Gospels.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Ibid., #104.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., #106.

<sup>157</sup> Ignatius uses all four Gospels, while the Mass uses one Gospel for the Sunday cycle of readings, and another for weekday readings. For example, 2011 is Year A for Sundays, and covers major sections of Matthew. 2011 is Year I for weekdays, which covers large parts of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. There is variation within this structure: the Mass often uses John’s Gospel for major feast days (both those on weekdays and Sundays) and during the Easter season. So, taken as a whole, both the Mass and the *Exercises* use large sections of all four Gospels as well as other scriptural texts.



One sees a close correlation between the Second Week and the Liturgy of the Word. In the *Exercises* one seeks to know, love, and follow God more by hearing and/or reading the Scriptures and then prayerfully contemplating them. Recall Benedict's emphasis on Christ as both *Logos* and Son. The Son is the Truth and a divine Person who welcomes humanity into personal relationship. In this vein, in both the *Exercises* and the Mass one is to receive first the objective revelation of the Scriptures. Second, one is to personally engage the God revealed in Scripture, and particularly the Incarnate Son. In the Second Week of the *Exercises* the retreatant applies his passions and imagination to make the Gospel scenes more personal and tangible. He should also recall that God became incarnate and did these things "for me."<sup>158</sup> The homily performs a similar function of bringing the objective truth of Scripture to bear on the individual personal lives of the congregation. The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* states that the homily should "take into account both the mystery being celebrated and the particular needs of the listeners."<sup>159</sup> Like the Second Week, the homily attempts to link the objective Scriptural events with the people's unique situations. Hughes states that the "point of the homily is identical to the grace sought in Week Two of the Exercises, namely, to enable the assembly to know Jesus more intimately, to love him more ardently and to follow him more faithfully."<sup>160</sup>

C.3. Third Week and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Hughes contends that "[t]he focus of Week Three is both the Last Supper and the Passion. So, too, these two themes are conflated in the Liturgy of the Eucharist." She goes on to quote from the GIRM: "the Sacrifice of the Cross and its sacramental renewal in the Mass, which Christ the Lord instituted at the Last Supper and commanded the apostles to do in his memory, are one and the same, differing only in the manner

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<sup>158</sup> *Sp.Ex.*, Mullan, #116, 104.

<sup>159</sup> United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, Washington DC: USCCB, 2002, #65.

<sup>160</sup> *Were not Our Hearts Burning within Us*, 10.

of offering, and...consequently the Mass is at once a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, of propitiation and satisfaction.”<sup>161</sup> There is great continuity in Christ’s ministry, from the Incarnation, through his ministry, and to his Passion and resurrection. This continuity is remembered and celebrated in the liturgy.<sup>162</sup> The Last Supper and Passion were the climax of his ministry, and in full continuity with the sacrificial self-giving that marked his entire life and ministry. The conflation of the Last Supper and the Passion, in both the Mass and the *Exercises*, is a witness to the unity of these saving events.

Remember Benedict’s statement that the Mass “is the entry of the eternal into our present moment in the liturgical action.”<sup>163</sup> God breaks into human history and invites the faithful to participate in his divine life. While this “entry of the eternal” reaches a high point in the Liturgy of the Eucharist, it occurs throughout the entire liturgy—from the opening rites, to the Liturgy of the Word, and into the Liturgy of the Eucharist. In the Mass the past events of Christ’s life and the congregation’s present experience mingle and mutually penetrate one another. God penetrated the human world in the Incarnation; humanity has likewise penetrated Trinitarian life in the person of Jesus Christ. For Christians Christ’s life “is not simply a thing of the past but the far-reaching power of what follows in the present.”<sup>164</sup> The Incarnation is a double invitation: God invites humanity into communion, and God wants humans to invite him into their daily lives. The Church utters a Yes to this double invitation in the Eucharist. While communion is accomplished in Christ’s action, it is not yet complete. Sin and ignorance make humanity’s response a tentative Yes, or even a Yes-and-No. Benedict writes, “The liturgy does indeed have a

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<sup>161</sup> *GIRM*, #9.

<sup>162</sup> For example, the faithful recite the Nicene Creed at Mass which outlines Christ’s earthly life: from the Incarnation, through the Passion, and resurrection, to the Ascension. The preface of Eucharistic Prayer II mentions the Incarnation, Passion, and the resurrection (2011 Missal). The Mass celebrates not only the Last Supper, nor only the Passion—but the whole Christ-event.

<sup>163</sup> *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 60.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

bearing on everyday life, on me in my personal existence... The *semel* (“once for all”) wants to attain its *semper* (“always”). The Sacrifice is only complete when the world has become the place of love.”<sup>165</sup> Through Christ God radically participates in human life; one is called to welcome Christ’s participation in one’s daily life, and thus to participate in the life of God. According to Benedict’s theology, the Christian is called to a conscious participation with the liturgy so as to accept Christ’s saving action into one’s life. Further, one must contemplate and live according to Christ’s life outside of Mass so that his *semel* saving action is *semper* active in one’s life. Through Christ, God enters one’s life and one enters into God’s divine life.

Ignatius draws upon a similar theology of participation in the Third Week of the *Exercises*. The retreatant considers how Christ “suffers all this for my sins” and then ponders a reciprocal response: “What ought I to do and suffer for him.”<sup>166</sup> Note Ignatius’s use of the present tense: Christ *suffers*. The Passion is not locked in the past but enters into the retreatant’s present life. The retreatant then considers a response in the here-and-now, “to suffer for him.” The retreatant prays that Christ’s *semel* may enter the *semper* of the retreatant’s life. Ignatius would agree with Benedict’s statement that Christ’s “self-giving is meant to become mine, so that I become contemporary with the Pasch of Christ and assimilated unto God.”<sup>167</sup> Also notice how the retreatant imitates Christ humble receptivity. The retreatant’s posture throughout the Third Week may seem passive, yet it is actually an active receptivity modelled on Christ.” The retreatant is to “force [him]self to grieve, be sad and weep, and so to labor through” the Third Week exercises.<sup>168</sup> The retreatant must labor so as to share in Christ’s own “labor” of obedient suffering. This active receptivity and sharing hearkens back to the contemplation before the cross

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<sup>165</sup> Ibid., 58

<sup>166</sup> *Sp.Ex.*, Mullan, #197.

<sup>167</sup> *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 58.

<sup>168</sup> *Sp.Ex.*, Mullan, #195; “myself” in original.

in the First Week; there, the retreatant pondered, “What I ought to do for Christ?” The retreatant ought to be sad, weep, and labor with Christ during the Third Week. The retreatant’s active receptivity in the Third Week also foreshadows the retreatant’s act of self-offering in the Fourth Week. This self-offering reaches a climax in the *Suscipe* prayer. Since the retreatant’s active receptivity is modeled on Christ in the Third Week, there is a sense of mutuality; Christ acts “for” the retreatant’s sins, who then acts “for” Christ. Christ’s action is primary and infinitely greater, of course; the retreatant seeks to imitate Christ’s action within the limits of human nature. There is a mutual inbreaking and penetration, with each acting for the other.

The Third Week exercises are meant to deepen and intensify the spiritual movement present in the Mass. The Mass “is the entry of the eternal into our present moment in the liturgical action.”<sup>169</sup> Within the overall liturgical context of the *Exercises*, the retreatant receives Christ’s *exitus* in-breaking; this in-breaking continues in the retreatant’s meditations and life; Christ’s *reditus* then draws the retreatant’s life and meditations back into the liturgy and into the divine life. The drama and emotional power of the Last Supper and Passion is pondered for the length of the Third Week. The Third Week is a uniquely powerful moment for the retreatant to receive Christ’s Yes, and to say Yes to Christ in word and deed.

C.4. Fourth Week, Rite of Communion and the Concluding Rites. The Fourth Week of the *Exercises* closely mirrors the final parts of the Mass: the Communion rite, the prayer after Communion, and the rite of dismissal. One may ask why I am treating the rite of Communion in conjunction with the *concluding* rites of Mass. Is not Communion more closely related to the liturgy of the Eucharist, the Last Supper, and thus with the Third Week? To answer this, I refer to a point I made earlier—that both the Mass and the *Exercises* occur as parts with a continuous

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<sup>169</sup> Ibid., 60.

flow. In a sense, each part of the Mass leads into the next part, and so, too, for the *Exercises*. The chronological order is more important than the subdivisions that separate them. Still, there are reasons for treating the rite of Communion with the concluding rites of the Mass. With the reforms of Vatican II, the faithful kneel throughout the Eucharistic prayer, which ends with the doxology, “Through him, with him, and in him...” The faithful respond “Amen,” and then stand. Standing erect is a physical movement that images Christ’s Resurrection. Processing up the aisle for communion likewise has a feeling of freedom and movement that flows from Christ’s Resurrection. In the 2011 Missal, the Communion rite is its own section, following the four Eucharistic prayers. The rite of dismissal immediately follows the communion rite in the missal. Again, the faithful stand; they again move to the aisle, this time processing out of the church. Thus, in the rite of Communion and the concluding rites, there are similarities in posture, movement, and theological meaning (as shown below). For these reasons, I find it legitimate to treat these parts of the Mass together.

Next, let us briefly summarize the Last Supper and the Passion as they are celebrated in the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Ignatius says that, at the Last Supper, Christ instituted the Eucharist, “the greatest mark of His love.”<sup>170</sup> At the Last Supper, Christ said, “This is my body, given up for you.” Benedict notes that the “Lord could say that his Body was ‘given’ only because he *had* in fact given it”—in the Incarnation, throughout his life, and especially on the cross.<sup>171</sup> Through these events the resurrected Christ gives his Body, through the Church’s liturgy, to the congregation at Mass. The consecrated Host is thus a summary of all of this, encapsulated in the humble form of bread. The consecrated Host is a tangible sacrament of Jesus’ Resurrection. After Christ’s death he rose and appeared to the disciples. His resurrected body was unexpected,

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<sup>170</sup> *Sp.Ex.*, Mullan, #289.

<sup>171</sup> *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, emphasis his, 55.

and in a form that was not immediately recognized. With the eyes of faith each chosen disciple joyfully comes to recognize this as Jesus, in the flesh. Thomas proclaims on behalf of the disciples, “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:28). At Mass the Eucharistic prayer recalls the Passion of Christ. The rite of Communion follows the Eucharistic Prayer. In the rite of Communion the priest directly addresses Jesus: “who said to your apostles: Peace I leave you.” He thereby recalls Jesus’ promise to the disciples in John 14:27. Then, with the Eucharist on the altar in front of him, the priest says to the people, “The peace of the Lord be with you always.” This is an oblique but important reference to John 20, where the Risen Jesus said three times, “Peace be with you” (vv. 19, 21, 26). The priest is enacting his ordained status as *alter Christus*, an embodiment of the Risen Christ; but he does so with a humble prayer: “the peace of the Lord be with you.” To summarize, the priest repeats the Risen Jesus’ words to the apostles, adding the phrase “of the Lord,” while speaking these words over the Eucharist. The priest then breaks the Host as all say, “Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world.” Christ is sacramentally present in the Host, and is addressed directly in the Host as “you.” The consecrated Host is the Lamb, the one whom John the Baptist recognized Jesus as the Lamb (John 1:29), whom the congregation praised Jesus as the “Lamb of God, Son of the Father” in the *Gloria*. In the rite of Communion, the proclamation of the Lamb of God summarizes what has occurred, while also pointing to a new reality. In this Host is the Lamb who “take[s] away the sins of the world.”

The Eucharist and the Resurrection are closely, if mysteriously, intertwined in the rite of Communion. This is grounded in the Gospels, as Hovley notes the frequent presence of Eucharistic imagery in the Scriptural resurrection appearances.<sup>172</sup> At Emmaus the Risen Christ enacts the Eucharistic gesture of breaking the bread. The Risen Christ appears to the disciples in

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<sup>172</sup> “A Rock to Build On,” 5.

the upper room, where he celebrated the Last Supper. He later prepares for them a meal of bread and fish on the beach. In John's Gospel this meal hearkens back to the multiplication of the loaves and fish, where Jesus "took, blessed, broke, and gave" in a foreshadowing of the Last Supper. In examining the Fourth Week and the Communion rite, one sees a curious interplay between the Eucharist and the Resurrection. In the Communion rite of the Mass, the Eucharist is front and center, with Christ's Resurrection only implied and tacitly referenced. However, in the Fourth Week of the *Exercises*, the Resurrection dominates the landscape, with the Eucharist playing a more contextual and supporting role.

Returning to the liturgy, one notes that by receiving Communion, the individual Christian receives a kind of "encapsulated summary" of Christ's action into his own body. Consider the rich meaning of the phrase "receiving Communion." Christ accomplishes and gives Communion; the Christian receives this Communion. The *exitus* of the Incarnation, Last Supper, Passion, and Resurrection is meant to draw humanity into the Son's *reditus*. This dynamism is not complete until humanity accepts the divine offer. The reception of Communion at Mass can be seen as a summary and recapitulation of all that has happened up to this point: the Christian has received Christ's forgiveness in the Penitential Rite; he has received the Incarnate Word in the Liturgy of the Word; he has accepted Christ's gift of himself even to the point of death on a cross in the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Christ does all of this for the purpose of returning humanity to communion with the Trinity. Humans do not achieve divine communion; they receive communion from God. By receiving Eucharistic Communion, the Christian says Yes, by saying the word "Amen" to Christ's invitation to receive the Host in Communion. This is a deeply personal and uniquely experience for faithful Christians. The previous responses in Mass have all been made *en masse*. All say the *Confiteor*, the *Gloria*, and the *Agnus Dei* together. But at

Communion, each person comes forward individually and says “Amen” one at a time. This is still a communal act, as all proceed forward in a line; yet the personal nature of this communion is uniquely experienced and received by each one. One’s continued sinfulness endangers one’s Yes, and can turn it into a lie. One says Amen and receives the Host; but living a sinful life makes one a hypocrite. Christians want to say Yes to Christ with their lips and with their lives. The *Contemplatio* seeks to deepen the person’s Yes to Communion, so that it is a full and resounding Yes—encompassing the totality of one’s being.

As the Rite of Communion is a summary of the earlier parts of the Mass, so, too, the *Contemplatio* is an encapsulated summary of all that has come before in the *Exercises*. In the opening meditations of the Fourth Week, the retreatant reflects on Christ’s resurrection appearances. Ignatius cites thirteen different appearances: first to his mother then to his disciples. In these Fourth Week meditations, Ignatius asks the person to consider “the office of consoling which Christ our Lord bears, and to compare how friends are accustomed to console friends.”<sup>173</sup> Earlier in the *Exercises*, Ignatius has used the word “friend” (#54). There the retreatant was encouraged to make a colloquy to Christ on the cross “as one friend speaks to another.”<sup>174</sup> What was foreshadowed in #54 becomes realized in the Fourth Week. The Risen Christ consoles the retreatant as a friend. This theological imagery becomes even more intimate later in the Fourth Week when Ignatius uses the terms “lover and beloved” to describe God and the retreatant. Through the Exercises, the retreatant grows in intimacy and union with Christ; the retreatant first experiences himself as a penitent, then as a friend of Christ, and then as Christ’s beloved.

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<sup>173</sup> *Sp.Ex.*, Mullan, #224

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*



The retreatant is to “bring to memory the benefits received, of Creation, Redemption and particular gifts, pondering with much feeling how much God our Lord has done for me, and how much He has given me.”<sup>175</sup> The word “redemption” points to all of Christ’s saving actions: the forgiveness one experienced in the First Week, Christ’s Incarnation and public life contemplated in the Second Week, the Last Supper and Passion meditated on in the Third Week, and the Resurrection now contemplated in the Fourth Week. This brief summary is personalized and applied directly to the retreatant: in Christ, the Lord God has done all of this “for me.” As the reception of the Eucharist is like receiving an “encapsulated summary” of the whole of Christ’s redemption as contained in the Mass, so, too, the *Contemplatio* is a kind of personalized encapsulation of all that has occurred in the *Exercises*. Like the reception of Communion at Mass, the *Contemplatio* is a uniquely personal and powerful moment.

The final meditation of the Fourth Week is the “*Contemplatio* on Divine Love.” This is the high point of the *Exercises* and the completion of one’s personal *reditus*. Here one most fully experiences communion with God and his creation. There is a close correlation between this contemplation and the reception of Communion at Mass. In this exercise the retreatant personally sees how the *exitus* of creation is part God’s plan. “All good things descend from above; for example, *my* limited power from the Supreme and Infinite Power...just as the rays come down from the sun.”<sup>176</sup> In classic Ignatian style, the retreatant is asked to harness all of his or her inner powers to make a personal *reditus*. This involves emotion, intellect, and will. “I will speak as one making an offering with deep affection, and say: ‘Take, Lord, receive all my liberty.’”<sup>177</sup> As

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<sup>175</sup> Ibid., #234.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid., #237, emphasis mine.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., #234.

“God labors and works for me in all the creatures of the earth” so, too, I ask that “I may be able to love and serve the Divine Majesty in all things.”<sup>178</sup>

The retreatant asks to imitate and enter into Christ’s *reditus*. As Christ has given all to the retreatant, the retreatant now offers all of himself to Christ: “You, Lord, have given all that to me. I now give it back” in a spirit of gratitude.<sup>179</sup> This offering is open-ended. The retreatant does not immediately know what God may ask of him or her. The retreatant does not demand to serve him in a particular way [as a doctor, priest, etc.]. “I see myself as standing before God our Lord, and also before the angels and saints, who are interceding for me;” and then “offer and give to the Divine Majesty, namely all my possessions and myself.”<sup>180</sup> One asks to enter Christ’s *reditus* within a communal and liturgical context. The *Contemplatio* takes place within the communal gathering of the heavenly court, not just a private conversation between the person and God. This is a replay of two earlier meditations. In the First Week the retreatant imagined himself as “a knight [who] found himself before his king and all his court, ashamed and confused” at having offended the king.<sup>181</sup> In the “Call of the King” he made an offering to Christ the King “in presence of Thy glorious Mother and of all the Saints of the heavenly Court.”<sup>182</sup> Earlier imagery is utilized again, with a deepening of emotion and meaning. One recalls in one’s memory God’s loving act of *exitus*, wherein he created the universe, humanity, and the individual retreatant. The fall is creation’s No to the *reditus*; and the retreatant has acknowledged and grieved his part in this No. But Christ now invites the retreatant into service and relationship. Christ desires to redeem the world, bringing all in a *reditus* back to the Father, and welcoming the retreatant’s help. In the *Exercises* the retreatant has personally and powerfully experienced

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<sup>178</sup> Ibid., #236, 233.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., #234.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., #232, 234.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid., #74.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., #98.

Christ's redemption. In the final *Contemplatio* the retreatant's personal offering is placed completely within Christ's universal action. The retreatant is created in *exitus*, and now chooses to enter Christ's *reditus*. One now returns one's personhood to Christ's universal mission, within the context of the Church and the divine liturgy. The retreatant has disposed himself so that God may take hold of his life and all of creation. In serving God, the retreatant now wishes to help him take hold of all of creation. Instead of resisting God through sin, the retreatant now begs him to "take, Lord, receive all" of his being.

At Mass, the reception of Communion is followed by the rite of dismissal. After sharing in communion with Christ, and entering his *reditus*, the faithful are sent out in *exitus* to share his communion with others. They share Christ's mission, going out with the Good Shepherd to gather the lost sheep into his *reditus*. The different forms of dismissal in the 2011 Missal are all variations on a theme: "Go forth, the Mass is ended," "Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord," and "Go in peace glorifying the Lord by your life." The faithful can go in peace, preaching Christ to the world with their very lives. Ignatius takes up this same movement of *reditus* in the *Contemplatio*. After contemplating all the good that God has done for the retreatant, the person then asks for the grace to "be able in *all* to love and serve His Divine Majesty."<sup>183</sup> Ignatius cites several patristic authors in support of this point later, (#363). One is sent to labor with and for Christ the King on the greatest mission field possible: the entire world. Transformed and taken into his *reditus*, the retreatant can now go forth in his *exitus* to announce the Gospel of the Lord at all times. One can do this only with continued prayer and participation in the sacraments—returning to Christ again and again to be sent out with him again and again.

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<sup>183</sup> Ibid., #233.

#### **D. Analysis of Latin texts: Mass, Call of the King, and the *Contemplatio*.**

Having demonstrated that the overall thrust of the *Exercises* parallels the *exitus-reditus* pattern of the Eucharistic liturgy, in this section I compare the text of the Mass with two key meditations in the *Exercises*, the “Call of the King” (#96-98) and the *Contemplatio* (#234). This analysis will focus on textual similarities and will show how the basic dynamism of the Mass is present in these two meditations. I use these two meditations because they are integrative exercises and thus reveal much of Ignatius’s concerns about following Christ.

The “Call of the King” comes at the conclusion of the First Week.<sup>184</sup> In the First Week the retreatant underwent a long, thorough self-examination in the light of God’s commandments. The First Week concludes with a general confession and reception of Holy Communion. The Call of the King functions as a transition meditation. In the First Week the retreatant considers what Christ and the saints have done “for me;” Christ died for me, Christ and the saints intercede for me to the Father.<sup>185</sup> After focusing on sorrow and repentance in the early meditations, the retreatant is fortified with the sacraments of Confession and Eucharist to conclude the First Week. In the Second Week the retreatant will focus on knowing, loving, and serving Christ. The transition from repentance to discipleship occurs at Christ’s direct invitation in the Call of the King. This mediation introduces a new facet of one’s relationship with Christ—being with Christ in his work of salvation. Christ invites the retreatant to “come with Me, to labor with Me,” to share in the pain of battle so that the one may “also follow Me in the glory.”<sup>186</sup> This meditation sets the framework for the rest of the retreat: coming to Christ, laboring with Christ, sharing in his sufferings, and sharing in his glory. In the Second Week the retreatant considers the Trinity’s

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<sup>184</sup> See footnote above for a fuller discussion of the placement of the Call of the King within the First Week or Second Week.

<sup>185</sup> *Sp.Ex.*, Mullan, #53, 60, 63.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*, #95.

grand project of saving sinful humanity through the Incarnation, and then looks at Christ's public ministry. One focuses on being "with" Christ and laboring "with him." The Third Week looks at Christ's passion; here the retreatant is invited to spiritually and emotionally share Christ's suffering. The Fourth Week reflects on the Resurrection, and properly sharing in Christ's resurrected glory. Thus the "Call of the King" is not simply one meditation among many, but a key transition, an invitation from Christ, and an important prelude to what lies ahead.

The *Contemplatio* concludes the entire Four Weeks of the *Spiritual Exercises*. In the *Contemplatio* the retreatant calls to mind everything that God has done for him or her. God has given him the retreatant the gift of creation, redemption, his particular talents and "even his very self."<sup>187</sup> This final exercise is a review of the Four Weeks. God created the world and the retreatant. The retreatant has personally experienced God's "redemption" through the sorrow and forgiveness of the First Week. He has considered and even shared in Christ's work of redemption in the Second, Third, and Fourth Weeks through the Incarnation, Passion, and Resurrection. Having received many gifts from God, the retreatant offers his gifts and himself to God in return in the *Contemplatio*.

The *Contemplatio* builds upon and deepens the offering that the retreatant made in the "Call of the King." Having prayed over the mysteries of Christ's life, the final *Contemplatio* is made with a deeper knowledge and love of Christ. One has also seen the great cost of making such an offering—abandonment and death on a cross. The "Call of the King" focuses mainly on external, physical actions: conquering the world, bearing injury and abuse, and experiencing

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<sup>187</sup> Ibid., #234.

actual poverty.<sup>188</sup> The *Contemplatio* fills out this initial offering with a more complete, interior offering. In the *Contemplatio* the retreatant offers to Christ his liberty, memory, understanding, and will. These things are less tangible but more powerful and precious to the person. Indeed, one offers Christ “*all* that I have and possess.”<sup>189</sup> Instead of focusing on the specific end of Christ conquering the world, the *Contemplatio* is open-ended; God can use the retreatant’s offering according to God’s will. In both the “Call of the King” and the *Contemplatio*, there is a powerful spirit of imitation and reciprocity: Christ gives himself to the retreatant, who then gives himself to Christ. These meditations powerfully preview, review, exemplify, and intensify the whole of the *Spiritual Exercises*. Recognizing and understanding the Eucharistic language and themes embedded in these meditations is essential for proving the thesis of this paper.

We now turn to a careful analysis of the texts of the “Call of the King,” the *Contemplatio*, and the Mass. I have included key phrases from the Latin texts below, with English translations. This analysis will focus on linguistic and thematic similarities. I will examine several word/meaning groups. I have altered the fonts to aid in the comparison:

<b>bold:</b>	<b>rational, right, just</b>
ALL CAPS:	ACCEPT, TAKE, RECEIVE
<u>underline:</u>	<u>sacrifice, gifts, myself</u>
<i>italics:</i>	<i>offering, oblation</i>
grey highlight:	labor, service

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<sup>188</sup> Ibid., #95-98.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., #234, emphasis mine.

Mass

ACCEPIMUS panem, quem tibi  
*offerimus*... ut meum ac vestrum  
sacrificium ACCEPTABILE fiat apud  
 Deum Patrem omnipotentem.

SUSCIPIAT Dominus  
sacrificium de minibus tuis...  
**Dignum et iustum** est.  
 ...Hanc igitur *oblationem*  
*servitutis* nostrae, sed et cunctae familiae  
 tuae, quaesumus, Domine, ut placatus  
 ACCIPIAS... ratam, **rationabilem**  
 ACCEPTABLEMQUE facere digneris...

we have RECEIVED the bread we *offer*  
 you...that my sacrifice and yours may be  
 ACCEPTABLE to God the Almighty  
 Father.  
 May the Lord ACCEPT the sacrifice at  
 your hands...It is **right and just**.  
 ...Therefore, Lord, we pray: graciously  
 ACCEPT this *offering* of our service, that  
 of your whole family...acknowledge and  
 approve this *offering* in every respect;  
 make it **spiritual** and ACCEPTABLE...

Call of the King

**rationis ac iudicii** capaces *offerrent* se  
 totos huic labori...  
 facient *oblationem*...  
 (modo sit in hoc maior tui laus et  
servitium)...  
 me eligere ac RECIPERE ...

those who have **judgment and reason**  
 will *offer* their entire selves to the  
labor....  
 will make *offerings*...  
 (for Thy greater service and praise)...  
 to choose and RECEIVE me...

Contemplatio

et hoc reflectam ad me ipsum consyderans  
**rationabiliter et iuste quid** ex parte mea  
 debeam illi *offerre et dare*...

SUSCIPE, Domine,  
universam meam libertatem.  
 ACCIPE memoriam...Quicquid habeo vel  
 possideo, mihi largitus es: id tibi totum  
 restituo

reflect on myself, considering with much  
**reason and justice**, what I ought on my  
 side to *offer and give*...

RECEIVE, Lord, all my liberty,  
 ACCEPT my memory... all that I have  
 and possess. Thou gavest it to me: to  
 Thee, Lord, I return it

D.1. Rational, Right, Just. First, consider the phrase “rationis ac iudicii” in the “Call of the King.” This phrase is closely related to the Roman Canon. At Mass the people say that it is “dignum et iustum” to give thanks to God; later the priest asks God to make the offering “ratam, rationabilem.” In both the Mass and the “Call of the King,” one recognizes God’s true greatness, then decides that it is “rational/reasonable/right/just” to make an offering to God. In Benedict’s Christology and Eucharistic theology, he frequently refers to Christ as the *Logos*, the truth of God. The Father creates the orderly and beautiful universe through the Divine *Logos*. The *Logos* is the ground of all being. Similarly, Ignatius points out God’s orderly plan for humanity in the “First Principle and Foundation” meditation at the beginning of the *Exercises*: “Man is created to

<sup>190</sup> Latin Mass text from 1962 Missal. English from 2011 Missal. “Call of the King” from *Sp.Ex. PI*, #96-98. Parenthesis in Latin original. English from Mullan; parenthesis added to “for thy greater service and praise” to mirror Latin. *Contemplatio* “et hoc... et dare” from *Sp.Ex. PI*, #234; “Suscipe...restituo” from *Vulgata* #234; English from Mullan.

praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save his soul.”<sup>191</sup> The retreatant then considers the sins of humanity, his own sins, and how these sins damage God’s plan. By reordering one’s life, one reenters God’s orderly designs and saves his soul. The “Call of the King” gently references the “First Principle and Foundation,” as both use the words “serve and praise.” The “Call of the King” links God’s orderly overall plan for humanity, outlined in the “First Principle and Foundation,” with Christ’s specific mission. Christ the King’s call is in full continuity with the “First Principle and Foundation.” It is infinitely reasonable for one to offer oneself to Christ as set forth in the “Call of the King.” Christ is the *Logos*; his plan is logical. It is reasonable to respond to him in a rational and just way. It is “rational and just” to offer oneself to Christ, the *Logos*-Son. It is “right and just” to give God thanks at Mass. In the *Exercises* one offers oneself. In the Mass the Church offers bread and wine, and through these gifts the faithful offer themselves.

In both the Mass and the *Exercises*, this rational response is filled out with appropriate emotion. The priest exhorts the faithful to “lift up your hearts.” Ignatius urges the retreatant to consider the kindness of the earthly king, and how a knight would be criticized and rejected by others if he refused to serve.<sup>192</sup> Both the Mass and the “Call of the King” bring the emotions into one’s reasoned and just offering. For Christians the *Logos* is not an abstract Platonic form, but the personal God become incarnate in Christ. In the Old and New Testaments, one sees God inviting humanity into covenant. This covenant is a loving relationship, modeled on the Trinity’s

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<sup>191</sup> *Sp.Ex.*, #23, Mullan.

<sup>192</sup> While this statement refers specifically to the earthly king, it is also relevant for Christ the King. Christ’s goodness and power far exceeds the good earthly king, as Ignatius writes, “how much more worthy” is Christ the king. *Sp.Ex.*, Mullan, #94-95.



own loving relationship. Humanity is invited into “the dialogue of love within God himself—the dialogue that God *is*.”<sup>193</sup> God is in relationship because God *is* divine relationship.

Recall Benedict’s emphasis that Christ is both Logos *and* Son.<sup>194</sup> For humans, entering the divine relationship involves an emotional response as well as an intellectual decision. It is rational, right, and just to say Yes to the Logos. Ignatius brings out the logical nature of this decision in these contemplations. This choice is rational but also fully personal. The retreatant is to make a loving response to a loving, personal God. Emotions help the retreatant to remain faithful in relationship. The emotions involve not just the mind but also the heart, the passions, and the body. Both the Mass and the “Call of the King” involve a moving narrative, which further engages emotions and imagination. The Mass narrates the savior’s death; the *Exercises* narrate the battles of a mighty king. Both narratives are highly evocative, drawing in mind, heart, and imagination. In the Mass and the “Call of the King,” one lifts up one’s mind and heart to Christ in a spirit of loving service. Appropriate emotions fill out the rational decision and help humans to remain faithful to God. The *Contemplatio* asks the retreatant to make the offering with both “reason and justice” and “much feeling.”<sup>195</sup> In this final meditation of the *Exercises*, one engages both the mind and emotions. The Christian never leaves behind reason; he engages the Logos-Son most fully with both his power of reason and his emotion. Recall Benedict’s use of both narrative and systematic theology in his writings. The two volumes of *Jesus of Nazareth* restate the story of Jesus with exegesis and explanation, while *Introduction to Christianity* is a moving analysis and explanation of the Nicene Creed. Both narrative and systematics are rooted deeply in the Christian tradition. God is Logos and Person. God is the eternal truth who works in

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<sup>193</sup> Benedict, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism*, 344, emphasis his.

<sup>194</sup> See chapter 1, section A of this thesis.

<sup>195</sup> *Sp.Ex.*, Mullan, #234.

human history. Ignatius and Benedict use both the narrative and systematic traditions in their writings.

D.2. Accept, Take, Receive. Recall Benedict's discussion of representation worship. In representation worship one thing is mystically present in the other.<sup>196</sup> At Mass the priest and congregation offer bread and wine to the Father. The priest and people also offer themselves with the bread and wine. Through the prayers at the altar, the bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ. The priest and people receive the Body of Christ and ask to be transformed into the Body of Christ. By sharing Communion, they want to enter into communion with the Father, through Christ, in the Spirit. This is representation worship. In replacement worship one thing is only a poor substitute for another; for example, ancient Israel offered grain and animals to God as a replacement for themselves. However, in the representation worship of the Mass, the people mystically present themselves to God through the bread. The bread already bears human fingerprints, as it is the "fruit of the earth and work of human hands." The Eucharist takes up ancient replacement worship and fulfills it. The congregation mingles themselves with the offering, as when the priest prays quietly, "receive (*suscipiamur*) us and be pleased with the sacrifice we offer you with humble and contrite hearts." People can mingle themselves with a bread offering because this is no ordinary bread; they can mingle themselves with Christ's offering of himself through the matter of the Eucharistic bread. There is a kind of deliberate ambiguity in the Mass's mystical confluence of bread, wine, Christ's Body, the Body of the Church, the priest, the congregation, and the individual Christian. The people pray to become more fully the Body of Christ, the bread becomes the Eucharistic Body of Christ, and they then receive the Eucharistic Bread. In the Mass the Church joins the bread and herself with Christ's

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<sup>196</sup> See Chapter 2, section B.4 of this thesis.

offering of himself; there are many offerings, and yet only one in the representation worship of the Mass.

In the *Contemplatio* one sees a spirit of reception and offering similar to that of the Mass. The prayer's first two verbs are *suscipe* and *accipe*, "receive, accept."<sup>197</sup> The usual English translation, "Take, Lord, receive" can have overtones of ordering God to do something—as in "Take this away from me." However, the offering called for in the *Exercises* is clearly one of trust and hope. The retreatant has freely received, "*recepta*,"<sup>198</sup> gifts from God. The root of *recepta* is very similar to that of *suscipe* and *accipe*. There is a reciprocity of reception and offering here. The retreatant receives gifts from God, and then offers these gifts to God in the hope that God will receive them: *recipere*, *accipere*. This reciprocity is emphasized in the word *restituo*,<sup>199</sup> wherein the retreatant returns his gifts to God. *Versio Prima* uses other words, but with the same meaning: *de manu tua recepi, et tibi eadem reddo*—"received from your hand, and to you I return them." *Recepi* again takes up the Mass's language of giving, receiving, and returning gifts.

The dynamic of reception-offering found in the *Contemplatio* is an imitation of the text and dynamic of the Mass. For example, in the offertory the priest prays to the Father, "we have received (*accepimus*) the bread we offer you (*offerimus*)." Standing before the bread, the priest then asks the faithful to pray that "my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable (*acceptabile*) to God." We have accepted bread from God, and we now ask God to accept this bread/prayer/sacrifice from us. The people respond, "may the Lord accept (*suscipiat*) the sacrifice at your hands." God offers, and we accept; then we offer, and God accepts. This pattern continues in the Institution narrative of the Mass. The priest says that Christ took/accepted

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<sup>197</sup> *Sp.Ex., Vulgata*, #234.

<sup>198</sup> *Sp.Ex., PI*, #234.

<sup>199</sup> *Sp.Ex., Vulgata*, #234.

(*accepit*) the bread, lifted/offered it to the Father in thanksgiving, and then offered it (*accipite*) to the disciples. Continuing the narrative action, one knows that the disciples obeyed and took/accepted (*accepiunt*) the consecrated bread—now transformed into Christ’s body. Christ offers the Eucharist, and the disciples accept; then the disciples in turn offer the Eucharist.

Certain structural aspects of the Fourth Week heighten and deepen the Eucharistic focus of the *Contemplatio*. First, the *Contemplatio* occurs within the liturgy because in the Fourth Week Ignatius asks that the retreatant meditate “near the hour of Mass...[and] at the hour of Vespers.”<sup>200</sup> In Ignatius’s time people often attended public liturgies and simultaneously prayed their own private devotions; liturgies were conducted in Latin, a language unfamiliar to many. Thus one may imagine a retreatant kneeling at Mass while simultaneously making his meditation.<sup>201</sup> Second, the retreatant has recently meditated on several of the gospel resurrection stories, including the appearance at Emmaus. Ignatius notes that Christ gave the disciples “Communion” at Emmaus, and “they had known Him in the Communion.”<sup>202</sup> Third, in the *Contemplatio* the retreatant sees himself standing before God, and considers how lovers engage in “giving and communicating”<sup>203</sup> their gifts. In this vein, God goes so far as to “give me Himself as much as He can.”<sup>204</sup> The thrust of the meditation is this: God lovingly gives himself to the retreat through the “*communicatione*”<sup>205</sup> of the Eucharist. The retreatant is asked to respond in a similar way; receiving God’s gift of himself, he now offers himself entirely to God.

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<sup>200</sup> *Sp.Ex.*, Mullan, #227.

<sup>201</sup> Of course, the liturgical reforms of the last 50 years have helped to make the Mass more understandable to Christians, through the use of vernacular language, simplifying the liturgical action, etc. Thus, a proper adaptation of the Exercises for today may involve making the *Contemplatio* during Eucharistic adoration, immediately after Mass, etc.

<sup>202</sup> *Sp.Ex.*, Mullan, #303, as in *Autograph*. *Vulgata* uses more precise scriptural language from Luke 24, “*in fractoque ipsis pane*”—in the breaking of the bread. *PI* uses “*communione*” in the first instance, and “*fractione panis*” in the second.

<sup>203</sup> *Sp.Ex.*, Mullan, #231.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, #234.

<sup>205</sup> *Sp.Ex.*, *PI* and *Vulgata*, #231.

God offers himself, and the retreatant accepts; then the retreatant offers himself, and God accepts. With a context and movement marked with Eucharistic tones, one sees that the *Contemplatio* is a personalized version of the Mass's action of reception-offering.

D.3. Labor, Serve, Love. The language of labor and service in the *Exercises* and in the Mass is very similar. The bread offered at Mass is the “*work* of human hands.” Later, the priest prays that God will accept the “oblation of our *service*.”<sup>206</sup> Liturgy is the work of the people;<sup>207</sup> in liturgy Christians celebrate God’s work of redemption. At Mass the Church seeks to cooperate with Christ’s work of salvation. For example, the priest prays over the gifts, “May the sacrifice of our worship, Lord...complete what was begun in sacred mystery and powerfully accomplish for us your saving *work*. Through Christ our Lord.”<sup>208</sup> In the Mass the Church celebrates God’s saving works and seeks to cooperate with him.

In the *Exercises* Ignatius draws upon this liturgical language of labor. Ignatius likewise places human labor within the context of imitating God’s labor. In the Second Week Christ the King invites others to “labor with Me;” retreatants are to “offer their entire selves to the labor” of Christ’s mission.<sup>209</sup> In the next meditation in the Second Week, the Trinity says, “Let Us *work* the redemption of the Human race.”<sup>210</sup> In the Third Week’s Last Supper meditation, the retreatant should note that Christ “instituted the most sacred sacrifice of the Eucharist, to be the greatest mark of His love.”<sup>211</sup> God labors for the salvation of humanity. At the Last Supper Christ continued this divine labor by celebrating the Passover; on this night, he instituted the

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<sup>206</sup> 2011 Missal. Emphasis mine in these and following citations to highlight similarities.

<sup>207</sup> Translation of Greek λειτουργία or Latin *liturgia*.

<sup>208</sup> First Wednesday of Advent. Dozens of other examples, including: “his *work* in the world,” opening collect of Pentecost Vigil; and “whenever the memorial of this sacrifice is celebrated, the *work* of our redemption is accomplished. Through Christ our Lord,” prayer over the gifts, Second Sunday of ordinary time. 2011 Missal, all emphases mine.

<sup>209</sup> *Sp.Ex.*, Mullan, #95-96. Emphases mine to highlight similarities.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*, #107.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*, #289.

Eucharist for his disciples and their followers. The Eucharist is the greatest sign of Christ's love; for the Church it is an ongoing sacrament of his work of redemption. Christ gives himself to us in the Eucharist. In the "Call of the King," the retreatant is asked to share in Christ's work by offering his own labor. In the *Contemplatio* the offering is more personal and more Eucharistic; the retreatant is encouraged to imitate Christ's gift of himself. The retreatant offers himself in a context and language that is layered with Eucharistic imagery. This was examined in the previous section, "accept, take, receive."

In the *Contemplatio* one meditates on love. There is a rhythmic back and forth movement, wherein the retreatant reflects on God's love, applies this personally to himself, and then considers his own response. For example, one meditates on "how much God our Lord has done for me, and...what I ought on my side to offer."<sup>212</sup> In the same vein, one should "consider how God works and labors for me...Then to reflect on myself."<sup>213</sup> Then the retreatant considers how "God *works* and *labors* for me in all things created," and he offers himself to "love and *serve* His Divine Majesty."<sup>214</sup> In the *Exercises* the salvation of humanity is not an abstract concept, but rather God's labor of love. Ignatius personalizes the rhythmic offering and reception that is present in the Mass; further, he highlights the loving nature of this offering. God offers himself to humanity in love through the Incarnation. This is not the perfect abstract "form" of the philosophers, but the personal God of Christian revelation. The retreatant has spent four weeks growing in the conscious acceptance of Christ. The retreatant then offers himself to God with much feeling, to love and serve God. He trusts that God will accept his self-offering. God

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<sup>212</sup> Ibid., #234.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid., #236.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid., #236, 233. Emphases mine.

lovingly offers himself; the retreatant lovingly accepts him. The retreatant then lovingly offers himself to God, trusting that God will accept him in love.

D.4. Sun, Son, *Ad Orientem*. Later in the *Contemplatio* Ignatius uses an image that is very similar to his mystical visions of the Eucharist at Manresa. I will show how this lends further evidence to the Eucharistic character of the *Contemplatio* meditation. In the *Autobiography* Ignatius describes his vision at Manresa: “The way in which God had created the world was represented in his understanding...he was seeing a *white thing*, from which some *rays* were coming out, and that God was making *light* out of it.” He continues, “Similarly, while being in that town in the church of the said monastery, and hearing Mass one day, as the *body of the Lord* was being raised, he saw with his interior eyes some things like *white rays* which were coming from above...what he saw clearly with his understanding was to see how *Jesus Christ Our Lord* was present in that most holy *sacrament*.”<sup>215</sup> Note the similarity between this vision and the one presented in the *Contemplatio*, where the retreatant is to “look how all the good things and gifts descend from above... from the supreme and infinite power from above; and so justice, goodness, pity, mercy, etc.; as *from the sun descend the rays*.”<sup>216</sup>

There are several common terms and images in these meditations. Note that in the two Manresa visions, there is a sun, rays, light, a “white thing,” the elevated white Host, and an understanding of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. In the *Contemplatio* there are gifts descending from above, power, a sun, and rays. As I showed above, the *Contemplatio* is to be made near the hour of Mass or Vespers. The retreatant is presumably in a church, facing the altar and/or tabernacle; if the meditation is made during Mass, the retreatant actually sees the white

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<sup>215</sup> *Autobiography*, in *Saint Ignatius of Loyola: Personal Writings; Reminiscences, Spiritual Diary, Select Letters Including the Text of the Spiritual Exercises*. (trans. and ed. Joseph A. Munitiz, and Philip Endean London: Penguin Books, 1996), #29. As in the *Exercises*, the citation “#29” refers to the paragraph number in the *Autobiography*. All emphases mine; I am trying to show textual and thematic similarities in these two Ignatian texts.

<sup>216</sup> *Sp.Ex.*, #237. Emphases mine.

elevated Host. Fresh in the retreatant's mind is the "Communion" at Emmaus. The retreatant is to ponder God giving himself as a lover. David Fleming writes this about the Manresa vision: Ignatius "sees how in the white rays coming down [from] the host we witness the eternal stance of Jesus giving himself totally to us, and at the same time in the priest's gesture of elevating the host we witness Jesus in that same eternal stance offering himself totally to the Father. *That is how Christ is present in the Sacrament.*"<sup>217</sup> This is the same Eucharistic movement that one sees in the *Contemplatio*. At the Manresa Mass Ignatius sees how Jesus is giving himself to humanity in the Eucharist. He is elevated in the host, but shining down on the world. In the *Contemplatio* God's gifts descend as rays descend from the sun. The *Contemplatio* uses this Eucharistic and sun imagery to compel the retreatant to make a loving response. As Christ offers himself to us, the retreatant is invited to make a similar offering of himself to God. This will be discussed further in the *reditus* section below.

Keep in mind that the *Exercises* are not a textbook of systematic theology, but a retreat guidebook based on Ignatius's own conversion. The *Autobiography* describes Ignatius's conversion in a series of experiences and visions. The goal of the *Exercises* is to aid the retreatant in evocative prayer that will recenter his life on Christ. There are several examples of personal experiences from the *Autobiography* that are outlined for retreatants in the *Exercises*. One of these examples is Ignatius's discussion of discernment of spirits in the *Exercises* (#313-336). In the *Autobiography* Ignatius notes that he began "little by little coming to know the

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<sup>217</sup> David Fleming, "Ignatian Passion: The Challenge of the Cross in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" A talk given at the Ignatian Spirituality Conference, St Louis University, emphasis his. Published in revised form as "What Does it Mean 'to Belong to God?' A Reflection on the Third Week of the *Spiritual Exercises*," in *Sharing the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*. (ed. David Fleming; St. Louis: Review for Religious, 2008). The quote appears in Fleming's original text of his talk, but not in the published version. In the text of Fleming's talk, he wrote "down to the host," but I have changed it to "down from the host." I presume this was a typo; "down from" seems more logical, based on Ignatius's Manresa vision.



difference in kind of spirits that were stirring: the one from the devil, and the other from God.”<sup>218</sup> The editor notes, “This was the first reflection he made on the things of God; and later, when he produced the *Exercises*, it was from here that he began to get clarity regarding the matter of the differences in kind of spirits.”<sup>219</sup> As Ignatius drew upon his own personal experience of discernment when he was writing the *Exercises*, I am arguing that Ignatius also draws upon his personal Eucharistic vision in Manresa when he was writing the *Contemplatio*.

There are other, more subtle Eucharistic references in the *Contemplatio*. As Benedict points out in *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, the ancient *ad orientem* position of the priest and congregation at Mass draws a connection between the resurrection of Christ the Son and the rising sun. Benedict explains this long-standing directional worship in this way: “Christians look toward the east, the rising sun. This is not a case of Christians worshipping the sun but of the cosmos speaking of Christ...Christ, represented by the sun, is the place of the Shekinah, the true throne of the living God.”<sup>220</sup> Christ is the Son/sun who sets in his cross and death, and who rises again in his resurrection. While *ad orientem* has been used less frequently following Vatican II, the allusion to sun-Son is preserved in the 2011 translation of Eucharistic Prayer III: “From the rising of the sun to its setting a perfect sacrifice may be offered to your name.”<sup>221</sup> Christ is called the “sun of justice” in two antiphons on feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary.<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> *Autobiography*, #8.

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.*, editor’s footnote on #8, p. 15.

<sup>220</sup> *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 68. In the Jewish tradition, *Shekinah* is the hoped-for visible manifestation of God’s glory in the Temple, often represented by light. Benedict shows other historical links between Jewish synagogues, which were oriented toward the Jerusalem Temple, and early Christian churches’ *ad orientem* position. A full discussion of this historical relationship is beyond the scope of this thesis.

<sup>221</sup> This is an allusion to Mal 1:11: “From the rising of the sun even to its setting, my name is great among the nations.” See also Ps 19:4b-6: “In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun. It is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, like a champion rejoicing to run his course. It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other; nothing is deprived of its warmth.”

<sup>222</sup> See the Immaculate Conception on Dec 8 and the Nativity of Mary on Sept 8: “from her arose the sun of justice, Christ our God.” The verb “arose” emphasizes the rising Son-sun.

Ignatius draws upon this Son-sun imagery in both the visions at Manresa and in the *Contemplatio*. In the Manresa visions the sun is associated with the “white thing,” the elevated Host and with awareness of Christ in the Eucharist. As I have argued above, the context and thrust of the *Contemplatio* bears a strong similarity to Christ present in the Eucharist. In both the Eucharist and the *Contemplatio*, Christ offers himself to the retreatant in love, expressed through images of elevation and white/light. The images of sun-Son-Eucharist are closely related in Ignatius’s Manresa visions and his *Contemplatio* meditation. The Son-sun correlation is found in the Church’s liturgical tradition. *Ad orientem* was the standard liturgical orientation in Ignatius’s time, with churches and altars constructed so that the priest faced east while celebrating the Mass. East-facing worship was (and is) highlighted in some churches through large, stained-glass windows above the altar; at a morning Mass, sunlight would flood the church through this east-facing window.

I cannot say if Ignatius fully understood the theological basis of *ad orientem* worship. Nor can I say that he consciously associated the images of Son-sun-Eucharist-*Contemplatio*. However, in light of the common images and themes in his texts (both the Manresa visions and the *Contemplatio*) and the Church’s liturgical tradition, I am arguing that there are multiple intersections between the Eucharist and the *Contemplatio*. The allusions to the sun and Christ the risen Son are further examples of this intersection. The dynamic of the *Contemplatio* is that of deep gratitude for receiving God’s gift of himself, and then offering oneself to God in return. One receives God’s self, and reciprocally offers oneself to God. The reception of Communion is the concrete experience of this dynamic. The Catholic practice of giving thanks in quiet prayer for a few moments after Communion is an obvious liturgical opportunity to make a *Suscipe* offering of oneself.

### **E. Conclusion: The Retreatant's *Reditus***

The thesis of this paper is that the central movement of Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises* is the retreatant's entry into Christ's *reditus* within a Eucharistic context. I have attempted to show how this Eucharistic *reditus* movement is present throughout the Four Weeks. One sees this in the many explicit references to the sacraments, liturgies, and to the Eucharist in *Exercises*. One also sees this movement in the *Exercises* through its implicit Eucharistic context and dynamism. There are parallels between each of the Four Weeks and the four main parts of the Mass. The *reditus* movement is especially important in understanding two key meditations in the *Exercises*: the "Call of the King" and the *Contemplatio*. In these two meditations, both textually and thematically, one sees a close similarity to the text and movement of the Mass. In considering these different aspects, one sees that the central movement of the *Exercises* is precisely this: the retreatant's entry into Christ's *reditus* within a Eucharistic context. Pope Benedict XVI's systematic outline of the *exitus-reditus* movement in *The Spirit of the Liturgy* has provided a systematic resource for understanding this central movement of the *Exercises* and in setting forth the central hypothesis of this paper.

One may draw further parallels between the Mass and the *Exercises* based on Benedict's three forms of Jewish worship. The three forms of priestly sacrifice, word/prophecy, and obedient suffering are fulfilled in Christ. Those making the *Exercises* are brought into all three forms of worship through Christ. One studies the Scriptures, the saints, and the life of Christ in the Second Week in a form of "word" worship as one contemplates Jesus' fulfillment of the anointing prophesied by Isaiah (Luke 4:16-21). One is drawn into the "Call of the King" and a sharing in Christ's obedient suffering by imitating his "injuries and affronts, and any poverty."<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> *Sp.Ex.*, Mullan, #98.

And one shares in Christ's priestly sacrifice through the *Contemplatio* and an ongoing participation in the Mass.

Benedict's writings on the Eucharist and martyrs is also relevant here. The martyrs are the living liturgy's *crème de la crème*. Their offering mirrors Christ's offering on the cross; thus, the martyrs dramatically step into the *semper* state of the Eternal Son's offering. "His self-giving is meant to become mine, so that I become contemporary with the Pasch of Christ and assimilated unto God. That is why in the early Church martyrdom was regarded as the real Eucharistic celebration, the most extreme actualization of the Christian's being a contemporary with Christ, of being united with him."<sup>224</sup> Christ has so broken into their lives that they imitate him even in his passion and death, as true *Personae Christi*. The countless Jesuit martyrs are a striking example of this dramatic imitation of Christ.

The white martyrdom of many Christians is likewise a participation in Christ's self-offering. Bearing one's daily cross with ongoing faithfulness and charity in work and family life is a living sacrifice, full of joys and sorrows. As Hugo Rahner says, "The *Spiritual Exercises* are essentially an ordering of life, and this in turn comes to be seen as a modeling of one's own life on the crucified Christ through a choice either of the state of perfection or of the perfection of one's own state. The cross of the incarnate creator and Lord of all things stands in the very centre of the history of salvation, as well as of the spiritual life of the exercitant."<sup>225</sup> The weekly and yearly liturgical cycle opens up to living the Eucharist in an ongoing liturgy of life. The other sacraments and liturgies are pertinent here. Baptism celebrates new human life, while washing away sin, and bringing another soul under the reign of Christ. The Sacrament of Matrimony marks

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<sup>224</sup> Benedict, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 58.

<sup>225</sup> Hugo Rahner, *Ignatius the Theologian* (trans. Michael Barry; London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1990), 130-131.

the commitment of the couple to one another within the Church. Various Jesuits have explicated these connections. Nadal and others popularized woodcut images of the life of Christ, relating these to one's own cycle of life. Borgia connected the daily Mass readings with the *Exercises*. Stanley shows how Christ's four actions with the Eucharistic bread apply to the life of the priest, and by extension to the whole Christian community. Usually, food that is consumed becomes a part of the human body. However, in consuming the Eucharist devoutly, the faithful become more fully the Body of Christ. With the people, "The priest is to live by doing what he does at Mass...the priest makes the offering of the church: he offers the Church's sacrifice of herself, all she is and all she hopes and aspires to be...through, and with, and in 'Christ Jesus.'"<sup>226</sup> As Augustine tells the whole Church, "receive what you are."<sup>227</sup>

In varied ways, authors have expanded upon Ignatius's Eucharistic spirituality to help Christians live their entire lives within the context of the Mass. The Mass is the source and summit of Christian life. It is inherently expansive, like a mustard seed growing until it fills the whole of my life and the entire universe. This seed is Christ, the grain of wheat who dies and rises to feed the world with Living Bread. In the Mass, Christians are united again and again with the True Vine who quenches their thirst with his blood poured out. Ignatius has mystically and creatively drawn upon the very structure and movement of the Mass to form the *Spiritual Exercises*. In the Four Weeks of the *Exercises*, the retreatant receives Christ's *exitus*, immitates his *reditus*, and is sent out with him in loving *exitus* to draw all people into his *reditus*. The goal of the retreat is for Christ to be "all in all" for the retreatant and ultimately "all in all" in the universe.

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<sup>226</sup> David Stanley, *A Modern Scriptural Approach to the Spiritual Exercises* (Chicago: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1967), 213, 218.

<sup>227</sup> Augustine, Sermon 272, in *Essential Sermons* (ed. Boniface Ramsey; trans. Edmund Hill; New York: New City Press, 2007), 318.

Endnote. As stated in the introduction, I have chosen to use the name “Benedict” and not Joseph Ratzinger throughout this thesis. I did this for several reasons. First, most libraries, bookstores, and online databases now list his books under the author “Benedict XVI,” “Pope Benedict,” or a similar variation. Second, it would be awkward to list the books written before his papacy under one author, and those written after under a second author. Other works present further complications. He states in the foreword of the first volume of *Jesus of Nazareth*, “It goes without saying that this book is in no way an exercise of the magisterium, but is solely an expression of my personal search ‘for the face of the Lord.’”<sup>228</sup> On the next page he signs the work as “Joseph Ratzinger, Benedict XVI.” However, the book cover and all libraries list the book only under the authorship of Benedict XVI. While this foreword is surely a humble and notable gesture, it raises complicated bibliographical questions. Should I state in the body of the paper, “In *Jesus of Nazareth* Ratzinger writes...” and then list “Benedict” as the author in the footnote? Whom would I list as the author in the bibliography?!

For some theological projects, it is extremely important to determine if the author wrote a particular statement before or after his papacy. One document that he chiefly authored, *Dominus Iesus*, is somewhat controversial. Theologians involved in interreligious dialogue must determine what level of authority it has to know the implications for their work. My project is a work of spirituality within a framework of liturgy and systematics. There are arguments and proofs in this thesis, of course, but these do not concern controversial doctrinal matters. Therefore, for our purposes, it is not essential to know which level of authorship and Church authority is claimed by Benedict/Ratzinger in books such *The Yes of Jesus Christ*.

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<sup>228</sup> Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration* (trans. Adrian Walker; New York: Doubleday, 2007), xxiii.

In addition, over time history seems to favor listing all of a pope's writings under his papal name in library catalogues—regardless of when the publication occurred. Searching for Karol Wojtyla in the Boston College library database brings up a long list of books written under the authorial name John Paul II. Also, I intend this thesis to be useful for both scholars and popular readers. While most people in the year 2011 know that Benedict XVI was once Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (and before that Joseph Ratzinger), this may be less well known in future years. How many Catholics in 2011 know that John XXIII was once Angelo Roncalli? For all of these reasons, I used the name Benedict, Benedict XVI, or slight variations in all references to this theologian throughout this thesis.

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